FEBRUARY 1955

COMMENTARY

The Communist Terms for Peaceful Co-Existence — G. F. HUDSON
Wordsworth and the Rabbis — LIONEL TRILLING
How to Remedy Our "Puerto Rican Problem" — CHARLES ABRAMS
Storm Over the Investigating Committees — JAMES RORTY
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The Tree—A Story — ABRAHAM REISEN
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Three Poems
From the American Scene
The World of Station WEVD — RUTH GLAZER
Cedars of Lebanon
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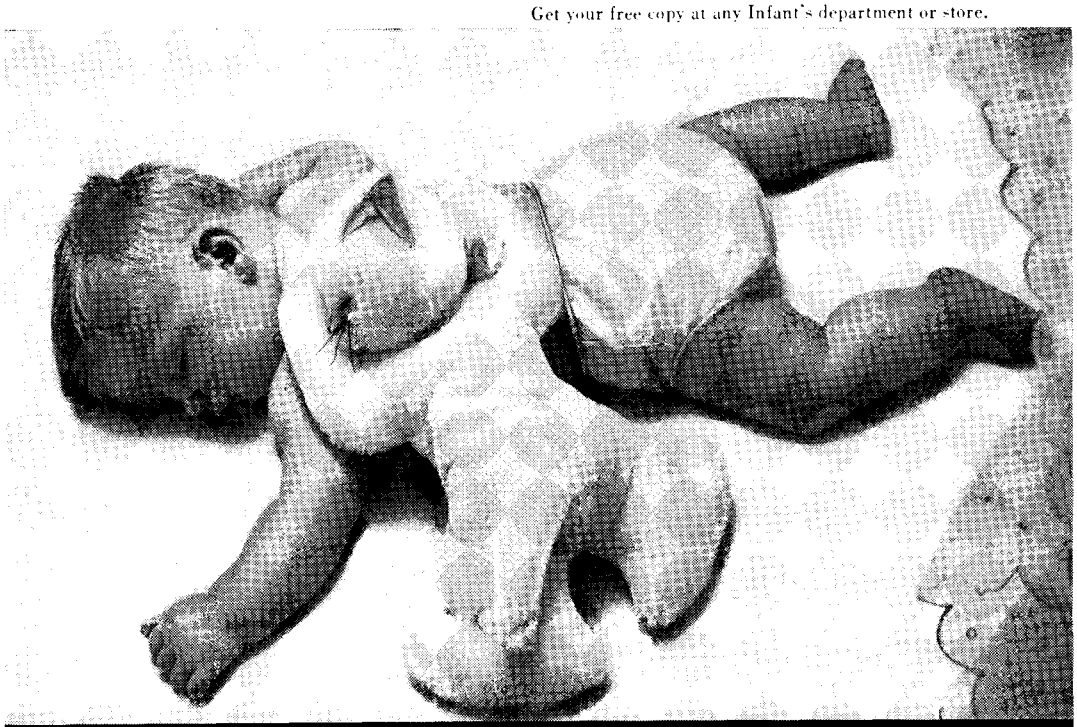

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

COMMENTARY

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A profile of the latest in that line of comedians who have discovered that the supposedly "special" accent of Jewish family life falls with surprising familiarity on the American ear.

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COMMENTARY

THE COMMUNIST TERMS FOR PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE

Have They Changed?

G. F. HUDSON

IT IS always helpful when people take the trouble to define the words they use in political controversy, and Soviet propaganda has been at pains to explain what we should understand by "peaceful co-existence." According to a recent exposition in *Soviet News* it comprises the three principles of mutual respect for territorial integrity, non-aggression, and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. This is, of course, the formula that has been used in the agreements between China and India and between China and Burma, and it is reminiscent of the bilateral non-aggression pacts which were once so freely offered by Stalin and Hitler and were preferred by some threatened nations to a system of collective security. It is not enough, however, for a critic of Soviet policy to point to the disturbing precedents of yesterday or merely to warn against too easy acceptance of the belief that the Muscovite mischief-maker is now at last really a reformed character; the campaign for peaceful co-existence needs to be studied in relation to the specific problems and needs confronting Communist policy-makers in the circumstances of world affairs at the present time.

FIRST of all, we need to remind ourselves that the idea of peaceful co-existence belongs to the world of liberal thought, not to that of Marxism-Leninism. It implies that there is no fundamental and ineluctable conflict dividing mankind and soluble only through the use of force; it assumes that, though wars between sovereign states may occur, they are not inevitable and can be prevented through statesmanship with the aid of some form of collective international organization. Relations of states on this view are entirely external and each one has the right to manage its internal affairs without interference from abroad, the national units functioning under law as constituents of an international order irrespective of their domestic social and political systems. In con-

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FOR months now our Western skies have been bright with doves from the East, but some of our warier bird-watchers have from the first wondered whether they were not animated decoys. Among these wary observers is G. F. HUDSON, a contemporary historian with a long memory. Our readers will undoubtedly read his report with special attention in view of the Soviets' recent *démarches* on Germany and European security, and Red China's aggressive moves to "liberate" Formosa, as well as her condemnation of captured American aviators to long years of prison. Mr. Hudson is director of the newly formed Center for Far Eastern Studies of St. Antony's College at Oxford, and political analyst for the London *Economist*. He served in the British Foreign Office during the war.

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trast to this, a doctrine that proclaims the need for a universal violent revolution to be carried out by an internationally organized political movement, is necessarily incompatible with such a pacific ideal. As the dogma was stated in a resolution of the Sixth Congress of the Communist International in 1928:

> The overthrow of capitalism is impossible without violence, i. e. without armed uprisings and wars against the bourgeoisie. In our era of imperialist wars and world revolution, revolutionary civil wars of the proletarian dictatorship against the bourgeoisie, wars of the proletariat against the bourgeois states and national revolutionary wars of oppressed peoples against imperialism are unavoidable.

No distinction is drawn here between purely civil wars and wars between "bourgeois" and "proletarian" states. Similarly Stalin in his *Problems of Leninism* laid down that "the revolution victorious in one country must not consider itself a self-contained entity, but a support, a means of speeding the victory of the proletariat in other countries." In the years when Western opinion kept on hoping that Bolshevism would gradually subside into a mere internal affair of the Russian people, Stalin's assertion of the principle of "socialism in one country" in his struggle against Trotsky was generally interpreted as a renunciation of the aim of world revolution in favor of a program of merely domestic transformation. But in 1939 an authoritative defense of Stalin against Trotskyite criticisms by the leading British Communist J. R. Campbell, *Soviet Policy and Its Critics*, emphasized—during the heyday of the Popular Front and class collaboration against fascism—that Stalinism did not mean what the liberal friends of the Soviet Union were insisting that it did:

> The Russian workers and their Communist Party have always recognized the need for rendering fraternal assistance to the workers of other countries engaged in decisive struggles. . . . There was no controversy therefore as to whether the Soviet proletariat should aid the revolutionary struggle of the workers in other countries.

This book was indeed written, not to reassure liberals of the pacific and law-abiding character of Stalin's regime, but to convince Communists that Stalin had not betrayed the cause of world revolution, as the Trotskyites claimed that he had. And Stalin himself was soon to demonstrate by deeds the justice of the case his devotee had made for him. Within ten years of the publication of Campbell's book the number of human beings in the world under Communist rule had trebled and the number of Communist-governed states had increased from one to nine; wherever in the course of the Second World War the Soviet armed forces had advanced, there the Communists and their stooges had been raised to power. Stalin unfortunately was not able to demonstrate before the eyes of Trotsky this proof of his loyalty to the cause of Lenin, for he had had Trotsky assassinated before the triumphant advances of the Soviet power that had spread Communist domination from the Elbe to the Yellow Sea. But at any rate by 1950 nobody could any longer denounce Stalin for failure to extend the frontiers of the faith, and the Stalinist zealot could claim that his master's earlier caution and dissimulation, his Popular Fronts and his alliances with the Western democracies, had been the essential preliminaries to his success—for had he not thereby averted a coalition of the Great Powers against Russia and so lulled the suspicions of his principal wartime allies that he was able to seize control of one country after another under their very noses before they realized what was happening?

Certainly, between the wars the Soviet Union practiced peaceful co-existence with capitalist states as far as the actual use of armed forces was concerned (except for Mongolia and Manchuria, which were only in the margin of the world-picture). There was, however, always the Comintern as an obstacle to normal and friendly relations between Communist Russia and other countries, even after the expansionist drives of Nazi Germany and Japan had brought Russia out of isolation into a system of foreign alliances. If an unsuspecting confidence was

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to be built up in the minds of leading statesmen of allied nations, this open and formal link between the rulers of the Soviet Union and the Communist parties of other countries had to be eliminated, and Stalin did not hesitate, when he considered that the situation required it, to dissolve the Comintern and to bid the American Communist party abolish itself. How could anyone fail to trust Russia after such a convincing manifestation of the will to live as a good neighbor?

The confidence created in the Western democracies by these calculated gestures was reflected in their wartime censorship of news and opinion unfavorable to the Soviet Union, in their universal make-believe about the unity of the Big Three, in their headlong demobilization of forces supposed to be superfluous after the collapse of Germany and Japan, in their desperate efforts to appease Stalin. When at last the Western statesmen were unable any longer to conceal either from their peoples or from themselves the breakdown of their hopes, it was too late to save what might have been saved by insight and foresight at an earlier date.

But at least the Western nations, aroused to consciousness of their danger, could now combine and equip themselves to preserve what they had left. The Communist advance produced a counter-movement; it was answered by NATO, by the Marshall Plan, by rearmament, and by "containment." No longer able to move forward in Europe without the risk of a major war, the Soviet power came to a halt. Blockade without war failed to reduce Berlin; threats and embargoes without war failed to intimidate Yugoslavia. For some time the triumphant surge of Communist revolution in the Far East served to divert attention from the stalemate that had been reached in Europe. But in the Far East, too, after a period when the West watched with equanimity, and even with approval, the Communist conquest of China, the tardy realization of an encroaching danger brought counter-measures and the raising of barriers to hold up the advance. The United Nations' intervention in Korea prevented the complete conquest of that country and the protection of the American navy was extended to the remnant of Nationalist China in Formosa. Southward there was Communist victory in Vietnam, but a Southeast Asian defense pact committed the principal Western powers to safeguard the independence of Siam, the obvious next target of Communist attack. Thus in Asia, as in Europe, the period of big gains at small risk drew to an end. The further way forward must be either by the use of force provoking a world war, or by guile. And it is the game of guile that is now being played.

Russia and China have exhausted and overdrawn the credit account of Western hopefulness and trust which was created for them at the outset by the wishful thinking of Western political leaders and the soothing propaganda that fed its illusions. The question now from a Communist point of view is how this credit account is to be built up again. The great Communist successes were gained because, during a critical period, the West was too doped, disarmed, and disunited to offer any effective opposition. The West became resolute, rearmed, and united in proportion to its growing alarm and awareness of danger, after a succession of aggressive *faits accomplis* and manifestations of hostility from the Communist side. The process has reached a point, particularly with the rearming of West Germany and Japan, at which the Sino-Soviet bloc finds itself confronted with potentially superior power and is feeling the strain of the conflict it has provoked. Weapons of economic and political warfare are now being used by the West to an extent which seriously embarrasses the Communist monolith, and mere intimidation no longer avails to scare opposing powers out of any thought of *riposte* to Communist attack.

It is clearly time to go slow, to feign innocence, to lull and to soothe, until the Western mind, ever hoping for an escape from the cold war and release from the fear of a bombing one, goes back to its happy dream-world of 1945 and forgets once more its peril. If the peoples of the West again

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lose the sense of danger, if they cease to recognize the need to maintain full military preparedness, if they allow mutual dissensions to dissolve the bonds of common purpose that were drawn tight by the Berlin blockade and the Korean war, then the roads ahead will again be open to the thrusting columns of Communism on the march. The Communists' need today is for lullaby tactics, for a relaxation of tension, for co-existence and "coo-existence," to soften up the free world for the next phase of revolutionary expansion. As Lenin said in 1922, when the Soviet regime was on the defensive and had acquiesced for the time being in the independence of Poland, Finland, and the Baltic States:

> When it was necessary—according to the objective situation in Russia as well as in the whole world—to advance, to attack the enemy with supreme boldness, rapidity, decisiveness, we did so attack. When it will be necessary, we shall know how to do this again and again.

When Communists speak of the "necessity" of attack, it is in accordance with their theory of history, which represents the conflict between bourgeois and proletarian as a mortal struggle which can only end with the victory of the latter throughout the world. Since the violent overthrow of capitalism without regard to national frontiers is the objective of all Communists, attack is not merely optional but "necessary," whenever the situation is deemed ripe for action. But it is the responsibility of Communist leadership to avoid premature offensives which may lead to disaster; it is a matter of watching and waiting for the right moment when the enemy can be caught unprepared or disunited. Meanwhile there can be co-existence, and even partial and temporary agreements, with the enemy, provided always, as Lenin explained, that there is no weakening of the Communists' basic hostility towards him or permanent abandonment of the ultimate aim of global revolutionary victory.

QUITE apart from the authoritative expositions of the Marxist-Leninist faith which preclude the ideal of permanent peaceful co-existence, it might seem that the Communist states, with their recent record, have a long way to go before they can even begin to restore confidence in their good intentions. But, paradoxically, they are able to turn the very badness of the record to their advantage in publicity to the free world. Democratic opinion has grown so accustomed to expect from Communist governments nothing but truculence, vituperation, bad faith, and disregard of international law, that the slightest improvement evokes an entirely disproportionate jubilation and optimism. If an Iron Curtain government releases some unfortunate foreigner who has been held in prison for years without trial, the springtime of reconciliation is at hand; if it allows one writer to say something that it is not just a concoction from a Marxist textbook, political freedom is just around the corner; if it begins to observe some of the normal courtesies of international intercourse in its diplomatic relations, the millennium is already with us.

Ever since Stalin's death was hailed by the optimists as the beginning of a new era (for, once he was dead, all the evil of Communism could be attributed to him personally), every smallest sign of better behavior in Russia's domestic or external relations has received the most extravagant publicity in Western countries, so that there is a widespread impression of fundamental changes in the Communist outlook. It is unnecessary, therefore, for Moscow and Peking to make any real concessions in order to win approval and gratitude in the West; they have only to abate somewhat the worst of their outrages. Even the Chinese Communist imprisonment of captive American airmen in violation of the Korean armistice terms seems likely to turn out wholly to the advantage of Peking; at the time of writing the case is still in suspense, but it may be expected that, if and when Chou En-lai is graciously pleased to pardon the victims of China's bad faith, wide sections of Western opinion will greet the outcome as an outstanding act of magnanimity and good will.

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The ease with which the Communist states are able to make a favorable impression on Western public opinion by the slightest gestures of improved behavior is due primarily to the intense craving of the democratic peoples for a permanent peace and for a settlement with the Communist powers. This gives the latter an immense advantage in negotiation with democratic governments whenever tension is relaxed. In a period of acute crisis, with the issues clearly defined, as during the blockade of Berlin, a democratic government can generally count on enough popular support to enable it to make a firm stand against threats and coercion. But as soon as the strain has lessened and questions in dispute are under negotiation, the statesmen of the democracies find themselves under pressure from their peoples to reach agreement while there is no corresponding pressure on the other side. The dilemma which confronts them is that which is described by Byrnes in his memoirs as besetting him in his dealings with Russia in 1946:

> The public at home did not have the clear view of Soviet ambitions which the President and I got at Potsdam and which was revealed even more clearly here in London. We had refrained, after Potsdam, from publicly expressing our concern because of our desire to maintain friendly relations with our Russian allies. . . . The Soviet leaders knew of our people's strong desire for peace and they thought we would not dare to let the conference fail.

As Byrnes's account shows, he and Bevin at that time gave way again and again to Molotov because Molotov was ready to walk out if he did not get what he wanted and they were not. Later on, and mainly because their peoples came to be more aware of Soviet aggressiveness, the Western foreign ministers acquired the habit of standing firm at conferences with the Russians and acknowledging failure to agree when no acceptable compromise could be reached. But today there are ominous signs, at least in Europe, of a return to the state of affairs which so embarrassed Byrnes and Bevin in 1946. In Britain and France the demand for a settlement with Russia through a conference of heads of governments has been growing in strength for some time, and politicians with elections in prospect are afraid of the consequences either of refusing to hold such a conference or of returning from it without the longed-for "settlement."

The Western governments have so far maintained their position that a conference cannot be considered until the agreements on European defense, including the provisions for rearming West Germany, have finally been ratified. But even if and when the process of ratification has been completed, the "situation of strength" sought by Western policy will hardly have been achieved after the deep political divisions which have been created in France and Germany, and to a lesser extent in Britain, over the question of German rearmament. The Western statesmen will then have to go to conference with political uncertainty in their rear and under strong pressure to abandon the positions they have maintained for the last five years in order to obtain the semblance of a settlement with Russia.

There is no prospect that Russia will be any more ready than hitherto to agree either to reunification of Germany on the basis of free elections or to integration of Germany in the Western defense system. Moscow may be expected to hold out for a neutralized Germany unified by amalgamation of the two existing regimes and for Western recognition of the Oder-Neisse Line. If the Western governments recognize the Oder-Neisse frontier they will alienate German national sentiment without any guarantee that Russia will not subsequently attract that sentiment by the offer of a deal at the expense of Poland; if they agree to the neutralization of a Germany in which the Communist-indoctrinated *Volkspolizei* will be at the outset the only armed force, they will renounce German integration with the West without any guarantee that an armed putsch will not sooner or later sweep Germany into the Soviet orbit. Yet it will be hard for the West to reject terms which will seem to many to provide a reasonable solution of an intolerable deadlock.

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In the Far East, Communist hopes are probably set not so much on any direct negotiation with the Western powers as on encouragement and support of Afro-Asian neutralist maneuvers, with Communist-infested Indonesia as Stalking-horse Number One. Russia and China can indeed afford to remain in the background for a while and let Jakarta get on with the good work, rallying the Afro-Asian hosts under the banners of anti-imperialism, with Mr. Nehru doing his best not to have the limelight taken from him by his Indonesian partner. The deal by which Pakistan was induced to agree to the inclusion of Communist China on the Afro-Asian invitation list on condition that Israel be excluded showed the drift of the new bi-continental neutralism no less than Mr. Nehru's argument that America's grievance over the imprisonment of American airmen in violation of the terms of the Korean armistice was matched by Communist China's grievance because Chinese prisoners who had refused repatriation had gone to Formosa as the armistice terms entitled them to do.

The West must now face the fact that a large part of the intelligentsia of countries from Indonesia to Morocco, conditioned by the struggle for independence from colonial rule, will automatically side with China in any conflict of the latter with a Western nation, and will regard any Western participation in a collective security system in the Far East as a manifestation of imperialism. Acts of open aggression by Russia or China in Asia would no doubt modify this attitude, but if they refrain for the present from any move against India or Burma and concentrate on backing the Vietminh under cover of the ambiguous Geneva agreements, they will have an excellent prospect of retaining and increasing the sympathies of the Afro-Asian bloc and driving new wedges into the cracks in the unity of the free world.

The Communists may also reasonably hope to obtain from a phase of peaceful coexistence the removal of all restrictions on world trade in strategic materials and the cessation of the political warfare by radio and leaflet which has been the West's tardy, but effective, response to the subversive propaganda of international Communism. The ending of economic restrictions would enable the Communist countries, and particularly China, rapidly to increase their war potential, while the Western nations, increasingly convinced that the danger of war was over, would be less and less willing to divert their resources into armaments.

There is no prospect of an agreement for reduction of armaments that would provide for really effective inspection on the other side of the Iron Curtain; no progress has been made in any disarmament talks towards overcoming this supreme obstacle. There is, however, a great danger that the Western peoples, in their longing for peace, might be induced, after an apparent improvement in the international situation, to enter into an agreement which would tie their hands, but not those of the other side.

To persuade the West to call off its political warfare is a no less important objective for the Communist powers, for they are profoundly disturbed by any influence which impinges on their monopoly of thought-control and news inside their own territories. Their fear of foreign broadcasts has been proved by the immense trouble they have taken to jam them. They can well afford to offer a formal reciprocity for a call-off in this form of conflict, for, whereas the free world has no way of speaking to the peoples of Communist-governed states except by radio and leaflet-balloon, propaganda on the air is only a small part of the Communist states' publicity to the free world, the greater part of it being carried on by the Communist parties and fellow-travelers within each country.

Nevertheless, as soon as there are any signs of a *détente* in relations with the Soviet bloc, there will be strong pressure for a ban on anything unpleasant being said either to or about Communist states, so that no offense may be given to their notoriously sensitive leaders.

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If this estimate of prospects is valid, it follows that the Communists have more to gain at the present time from a period of peaceful co-existence than from attempts to break down by force the very considerable strength which is now arrayed against them. Insofar as they have been driven to fall back on co-existence after the previous period of expansion, it is because of the situation of strength which has already been built up by the principal powers of the free world since they became aware of their danger. But the very restraint which has been imposed on Communist dynamism by the barriers raised against it will now be taken widely as evidence that the Communists do not any longer harbor any aggressive designs and that there is therefore no longer any need to take precautions against them. Herein lies the chance for Communist diplomacy and propaganda to dissolve the free world's situation of strength and create the conditions for a fresh advance towards world revolution.

The only safeguard there can be against such disintegration is a firm will not to enter into agreements which yield vital interests for the sake of the mere appearance of reconciliation and vague hopes of future good will. The destiny of the Western democracies in the years ahead will depend on how well they have learned the lessons of Munich and Yalta, on how far experience has taught them to beware of the facile attraction of policies of appeasement. One knows that in the last resort they will fight for their freedom; the question is whether they can bring themselves in good time so to act that they will never need to fight.

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WORDSWORTH AND THE RABBIS

The Affinity Between His "Nature" and Their "Law"

LIONEL TRILLING

IN OUR culture it is not the common habit to read the books of a century ago. Very likely all that we can mean when we say that a writer of the past is "alive" in people's minds is that, to those who once read him as a college assignment or who have formed an image of him from what they have heard about him, he exists as an attractive idea. And if we think of the three poets whom Matthew Arnold celebrated in his "Memorial Verses," we know that Byron is still attractive and possible, and so is Goethe. But Wordsworth is not attractive and not an intellectual possibility. He was once the great, the speaking poet for all who read English. He spoke both to the ordinary reader and to the literary man. But now the literary man outside the university will scarcely think of referring to Wordsworth as one of the important events of modern literature; and to the ordinary reader he is likely to exist as the very type of the poet whom life has passed by, presumably for the good reason that he passed life by.

If we ask why Wordsworth is no longer the loved poet he once was, why, indeed, he is often thought to be rather absurd and even a little despicable, one answer that suggests itself is that for modern taste he is too Christian a poet. He is certainly not to be wholly characterized by the Christian element of his poetry. Yet at the present time, the doctrinal tendency of the world at large being what it is, that which *is* Christian in Wordsworth may well seem to be more prominent than it ever was before, and more decisive. I have in mind his concern for the life of humbleness and quiet, his search for peace, his sense of the burdens of this life, those which are inherent in the flesh and spirit of man. Then there is his belief that the bonds of society ought to be inner and habitual, not merely external and formal, and that the strengthening of these bonds by the acts and attitudes of charity is a great and charming duty. Christian too seem his responsiveness to the idea that there is virtue in the discharge of duties which are of the great world and therefore dangerous to simple peace and his impulse to submit to the conditions of life under a guidance that is at once certain and mysterious—his sense of the possibility and actuality of enlightenment is one of the characteristic things about him. It was not he who said that the world was a vale of soul-making, but Keats could not have made this striking paraphrase of the Christian sentiment had not Wordsworth made it possible for him to do so. Above all, there is his consciousness of the *neighbor*, his impulse to bring into the circle of significant life those of the neigh-

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TO MOST of his contemporaries, Wordsworth was a great poet of the religious and moral life, but with the modernist devaluation of both religion and morality, whether supernatural or humanist, he became esteemed only as a poet, and later hardly as that. Today with faith once more on the agenda of the enlightened, LIONEL TRILLING again evokes the spirit of the poet who celebrated the mute but speaking reality of "rocks and stones and trees," and the closeness to the roots of being of simple, unlettered people who live next to nature—and finds in Wordsworth's thought a quality that he finds also in the tradition of Rabbinic Judaism. This essay grows out of a lecture originally given at Princeton in April 1950 for the centenary of Wordsworth's death and published subsequently, under the title "Wordsworth and the Iron Time," in *Kenyon Review* for Summer 1950 and, together with other addresses on Wordsworth, in a volume published by Princeton University Press in 1951. Mr. Trilling revised the essay for inclusion in his forthcoming book *The Opposing Self*, and we present it here, somewhat abridged, in that revised form. Mr. Trilling, a leading critic, is professor of English at Columbia University. His books include: *Matthew Arnold* (1939), *E. M. Forster* (1943), *The Middle of the Journey*, a novel (1947), and *The Liberal Imagination* (1950).

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bors who are simple and outside the circle of social pride, and also those who in the judgment of the world are queer and strange and useless: faith and hope were to him very great virtues, but he conceived that they rested upon the still greater virtue, charity.

Certainly what I have called Christian in Wordsworth scarcely approaches, let alone makes up, the sum of Christianity. But then no personal document or canon can do that; when we speak of a poet as being of a particular religion, we do not imply in him completeness or orthodoxy, or even explicitness of doctrine, but only that his secular utterance has the decisive mark of the religion upon it. And if a religion is manifold in its aspects and extensive in time, the marks that are to be found on the poets who are in a relation to it will be various in kind. It seems to me that the marks of Christianity on Wordsworth are clear and indelible. It is therefore worth trying the hypothesis that the world today does not like him because it does not like the Christian quality and virtues.

But the question at once arises whether this hypothesis is wholly permissible. Professor Hoxie Neal Fairchild says that it is not. In the chapter on Wordsworth in the third volume of his *Religious Trends in English Poetry,* he tells us that Wordsworth was *not* a Christian poet and goes on to express his doubt that Wordsworth was ever properly to be called a Christian person even when he became a communicant of the Church and its defender. And Professor Fairchild goes so far as to tell us that as a poet Wordsworth is actually dangerous to the Christian faith. He is dangerous in the degree that he may be called religious at all, for his religion is said to be mere religiosity, the religion of nothing more than the religious emotion, beginning and ending in the mere sense of transcendence. Naked of dogma, bare of precise predication of God and the nature of man, this religiosity of Wordsworth's is to be understood as a pretentious and seductive rival of Christianity, the more dangerous because it gives license to man's pretensions.

We can surely admit the cogency of Professor Fairchild's argument within the terms of its intention. The 19th century was in many respects a very Christian century, but in the aspect of it which bulks largest in our minds it developed chiefly the ethical and social aspects of Christian belief, no doubt at the cost of the dogmatic aspect. And it is probably true that when the dogmatic principle in religion is slighted, religion goes along for a while on generalized emotion and ethical intention and then loses the force of its impulse, even the essence of its being. In this sort of attenuation of religion Wordsworth did indeed play a part by making the sense of transcendence and immanence so real and so attractive. During the most interesting and important period of his career, Wordsworth seems to have been scarcely aware of the doctrines of the Church in which he had been reared. He spoke of faith, hope, and charity without reference to the specifically Christian source and end of these virtues. His sense of the need for salvation did not take the least account of the Christian means of salvation. Of evil in the Christian sense of the word, of sin as an element of the nature of man, he also took no account.

And yet, all this being true, as we look at Wordsworth in the context of his own time and in the context of our time, what may properly be called the Christian element of his poetry can be made to speak to us, as it spoke to so many Christians in the 19th century, as it spoke to so many who were not Christians and made them in one degree or another accessible to Christianity. He certainly did not in his great period accept as adequate what the Church taught about the nature of man. But he was one of the few poets who really discovered something about the nature of man. What he discovered can perhaps be shown to be at variance with the teachings of Christianity. Yet I think it can also be shown that Wordsworth discovered much that a strong Christianity must take account of, and be easy with, and make use of. It can be shown too, I believe, that the Church has found advantage in what Wordsworth has told us of the nature of man. And so, although I do indeed recognize the force of Professor Fairchild's opinion to the contrary, I cannot help feeling that there is an important element of Christianity with which Wordsworth has a significant affinity, even though this element is not at the present time of chief importance to Christian intellectuals.

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I do not, however, wish to appear to be forcing even a great poet into a faith whose members do not want him there. And I am not, in any case, so much concerned to prove that Wordsworth is a Christian poet as to account for a certain quality in him which makes him unacceptable to the modern world. Without repudiating my first hypothesis, I shall therefore abandon it for this fresh one: that the quality in Wordsworth that now makes him unacceptable is a Judaic quality.

MY KNOWLEDGE of the Jewish tradition is, I fear, all too slight to permit me to hope that I can develop this new hypothesis, as to the Judaic quality in Wordsworth, in any very enlightening way. Yet there is one Jewish work of traditional importance which I happen to know with some intimacy, and it lends a certain color of accuracy to my notion. This is the work called *Pirke Aboth,* that is, the Sayings, the *sententiae,* of the Fathers. It was edited in the 2nd century of the present era by the scholar and teacher who bore the magnificent name of Judah the Prince and who is traditionally referred to by the even more magnificent name of *Rabbi*—that is to say, *the* rabbi, the master teacher, the greatest of all. In its first intention *Pirke Aboth,* under the name *Aboth,* "Fathers," was one of the tractates of the Mishnah, which is the traditional Jewish doctrine represented chiefly by rabbinical decisions. But *Aboth* itself, the last of the tractates, does not deal with decisions; nor is it what a common English rendering of the longer title, "Ethics of the Fathers," would seem to imply, for it is not a system of ethics at all but simply a collection of maxims and *pensées,* some of them very fine and some of them very dull, which praise the life of study and give advice on how to live it.

My intimacy with *Pirke Aboth* comes from my having read it many times in boyhood. It is not the kind of book a boy is easily drawn to read, and I did not read it out of piety. On the contrary; for when I was supposed to be reading my prayers—very long, and in the Hebrew language, which I never mastered—I spent the required time and made it seem that I was doing my duty by reading the English translation of the *Pirke Aboth,* which, although it is not a devotional work, had long ago been thought of as an aid to devotion and included in the prayer book. It was more attractive to me than psalms, meditations, and supplications; it seemed more humane, and the Fathers had a curious substantiality. Just where they lived I did not know, nor just when, and certainly the rule of life they recommended had a very quaint difference from the life I knew or wanted to know. Yet they were real, their way of life had the charm of coherence. And when I went back to them, using R. Travers Herford's scholarly edition and translation of their sayings,* I could entertain the notion that my early illicit intimacy with them had had its part in preparing the way for my responsiveness to Wordsworth, that between the Rabbis and Wordsworth an affinity existed.

But I must at once admit that a large difficulty stands in the way of the affinity I suggest. The *Aboth* is a collection of the sayings of masters of the written word. The ethical life it recommends has study as both its means and its end, the study of Torah, of the Law, which alone can give blessedness. So that from the start I am at the disadvantage of trying to make a conjunction between scholars living for the perpetual interpretation of a text and a poet for whom the natural world was at the heart of his doctrine and for whom books were barren leaves. The Rabbis expressed a suspiciousness of the natural world which was as extreme as Wordsworth's suspiciousness of study. That the warning was given at all seems to hint that it was possible for the Rabbis to experience the natural world as a charm and a temptation—still, the *Aboth* does warn us that whoever interrupts his study to observe the beauty of a fine tree or a fine meadow is guilty of sin. Yet I think it can be said without more extravagance than marks my whole comparison that it is precisely here, where they seem most to differ, that the Rabbis and Wordsworth are most at one. For between the Law as the Rabbis understood it and Nature as Wordsworth understood that, there is a pregnant similarity.

The Rabbis of the *Aboth* were Pharisees and here is Mr. Herford's statement of the defining principle of Pharisaism: "The cen-

**Pirke Aboth,* edited with introduction, translation, and commentary, 3rd edition (New York, 1945).

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tral conception of Pharisaism is Torah, the divine Teaching, the full and inexhaustible revelation which God had made. The knowledge of what was revealed was to be sought, and would be found, in the first instance in the written text of the Pentateuch; but the revelation, the real Torah, was the meaning of what was there written, the meaning as interpreted by all the recognized and accepted methods of the schools. . . . The written text of the Pentateuch might be compared to the mouth of a well; the Torah was the water which was drawn from it. He who wished to draw the water must needs go to the well, but there was no limit to the water which was there for him to draw. . . . The study of Torah . . . means therefore much more than the study of the Pentateuch, or even of the whole Scripture, regarded as mere literature, written documents. It means the study of the revelation made through those documents, the divine teaching therein imparted, the divine thought therein disclosed." And Mr. Herford goes on to say that it might be observed of the *Aboth* that it makes very few direct references to God. "This is true," he says, "but it is beside the mark. Wherever Torah is mentioned, there God is implied. He is behind the Torah, the Revealer of what is Revealed."

WHAT I am trying to suggest is that, different as the immediately present objects were in each case, Torah for the Rabbis, Nature for Wordsworth, there existed for the Rabbis and for Wordsworth a great object, which is from God and might be said to represent him as a sort of surrogate, a divine object to which one can be in an intimate passionate relationship, which one can, as it were, handle, and in a sense create, drawing from it inexhaustible meaning by desire, intuition, and attention.

And when we turn to the particulars of the *Aboth* we see that the affinity continues. In Jewish tradition the great Hillel has a peculiarly Wordsworthian personality, being the type of gentleness and peace, and having about him a kind of *joy* which has always been found wonderfully attractive; and Hillel said—was, indeed, in the habit of saying: he "used to say"—"If I am not for myself, who, then, is for me? And if I am for myself, what then am I?" Mr. Herford implies that this is a difficult utterance. But it is not difficult for the reader of Wordsworth, who finds the Wordsworthian moral essence here, the interplay between individualism and the sense of community, between an awareness of the self that must be saved and developed, and an awareness that the self is yet fulfilled only in community.

Then there is this saying of Akiba's: "All is foreseen, and yet free will is given; and the world is judged by grace, and yet all is according to the work." With how handsome a boldness it handles the problem of fate and free will, or "grace" and "works," handles the problem by stating it as an antinomy, escaping the woeful claustral preoccupation with the alternatives, but not their grandeur. This refusal to be fixed either in fate or in free will, either in grace or in works, and the recognition of both, are characteristic of Wordsworth.

There are other parallels to be drawn. For example, one finds in the *Aboth* certain remarks which have a notable wit and daring because they go against the whole tendency of the work in telling us that the multiplication of words is an occasion for sin, and the chief thing is not study but action. One finds the injunction to the scholar to divide his time between study and a trade, presumably in the interest of humility. And the scholar is warned that the world must not be too much with him, that, getting and spending, he lays waste his powers. There is the concern, so typical of Wordsworth, with the "ages of man," with the right time in the individual's development for each of life's activities. But it is needless to multiply the details of the affinity, which in any case must not be insisted on too far. All that I want to suggest is the community of ideal and sensibility between the *Aboth* and the canon of Wordsworth's work—the passionate contemplation and experience of the great object which is proximate to Deity; then the plain living that goes with the high thinking; the desire for the humble life and the discharge of duty; and last, but not least important, a certain insouciant acquiescence in the anomalies of the moral order of the universe, a respectful indifference to, or graceful surrender before, the mysteries of the moral relation of God to man.

This last element, as it is expressed in the *pensée* of Akiba which I have quoted, has

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its connection with something in the *Aboth* which for me is definitive of its quality. Actually it is something not in the *Aboth* but left out—we find in the tractate no implication of moral struggle. We find the energy of assiduity but not the energy of resistance. We hear about sin, but we do not hear of the sinful nature of man. Man in the *Aboth* guards against sin but he does not struggle against it, and of evil we hear nothing at all.

When we have observed this, it is natural to observe next that there is no mention in the *Aboth* of courage or heroism. In our culture we connect the notion of courage or heroism with the religious life. We conceive of the perpetual enemy within and the perpetual enemy without, which must be "withstood," "overcome," "conquered"—the language of religion and the language of fighting are in our culture assimilated to each other. Not so in the *Aboth*. The enemy within seems not to be conceived of at all. The enemy without is never mentioned, although the *Aboth* was compiled after the Dispersion, after the Temple and the nation had been destroyed—with what heroism in the face of suffering we know from Josephus. Of the men whose words are cited in the *Aboth*, many met martyrdom for their religion, and the martyrology records their calm and fortitude in torture and death; of Akiba it records his heroic joy. And yet in their maxims they never speak of courage. There is not a word to suggest that the life of virtue and religious devotion requires the heroic quality.

As much as anything else in my boyhood experience of the *Aboth* it was this that fascinated me. It also repelled me. It had this double effect because it went so clearly against the militancy of spirit which in our culture is normally assumed. And even now, as I consider this indifference to heroism of the *Aboth*, I have the old ambiguous response to it, so that I think I can understand the feelings that readers have when they encounter something similar in Wordsworth in whose vision of life the element of quietude approaches passivity, whose exemplars of heroism endure because they are what they are, whose Happy Warrior derives his courage not from militancy of spirit but from his calm submission to the law of things. Where the scholars and Wordsworth are at one is in their quietism which is not in the least a negation of life but, on the contrary, an affirmation of life so complete that it needed no saying. To the Rabbis, as I read them, there life was, unquestionable because committed to a divine object, not needing to be affirmed by force or assertion, real because the object of its regard was unquestioned and because the object was unquestionably more important than the individual person who regarded it and lived by it. And Wordsworth, who loved to affirm the dizzy raptures of ear and eye and mind, also loved to move down the scale of being, to say that when the sentient spirit was sealed by slumber, when it was without motion and force, when it was like a rock or a stone or a tree, passive in the cosmic motion—that even then, perhaps especially then, existence was blessed. Wordsworth liked nothing better than to recite examples of courage, but it is the courage of mute, insensate things, and it is often associated with such things, with "rocks, and stones, and trees," or with stars —Michael on his hilltop, whose character is defined by the light of his cottage, which was called "The Evening Star," and by the stones of his sheepfold; or the Leech Gatherer, who is like some old, great rock; or Margaret, who, like a tree, endured as long as she might after she was blasted.

This non-militancy of spirit which I conceive Wordsworth and the Rabbis to have in common goes against the tendency of our Western culture, which is committed to an ideal of motion and force. With us the basis of spiritual prestige is some form of aggressive action directed outward upon the world, or inward upon ourselves. During the last century and a half this ideal has been especially strong in literature. If the religious personality of preceding times took to itself certain of the marks of military prestige, the literary personality now takes to itself certain of the marks of religious prestige, in particular the capacity for militant suffering.

A peculiarly relevant example of this lies to hand in T. S. Eliot's explanation of the decline of Wordsworth's genius from its greatness to what Mr. Eliot calls the "still sad music of infirmity." Mr. Eliot's theory of the decline suggests the depth of our belief in the value of militancy, of militant suf-

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fering, for Mr. Eliot tells us that the trouble with Wordsworth was that he didn't have an eagle: it is that eagle which André Gide's Prometheus said was necessary for success in the spiritual or poetic life—*"Il faut avoir un aigle."* As an explanation of Wordsworth's poetic career this is, we perceive, merely a change rung on the weary idea that Wordsworth destroyed his poetic genius by reversing his position on the French Revolution or by terminating his connection with Annette Vallon. Wordsworth had no need of an eagle for his greatness, and its presence or absence had nothing to do with the decline of his genius. His pain, when he suffered, was not of the kind that eagles inflict, and his power did not have its source in his pain. But we are disturbed by the absence of the validating, the poetically respectable bird, that *aigle obligatoire*. We like the fiercer animals. Nothing is better established in our literary life than the knowledge that the tigers of wrath are to be preferred to the horses of instruction. We know that we ought to prefer the bulls in the ring to the horses, and when we choose between the two kinds of horses of Plato's chariot we all know that Plato was wrong, that it is the blacks, not the whites, which are to be preferred. We do not, to be sure, live in the fashion of the beasts we admire in our literary lives, but we cherish them as representing something that we all seek. They are the emblems of the *charisma*—to borrow from the sociologists a word they have borrowed from the theologians—which is the hot, direct relationship with Godhead, or with the sources of life, upon which depend our notions of what I have called spiritual prestige.

The predilection for the powerful, the fierce, the assertive, the personally militant, is very strong in our culture. We find it in the liberal-bourgeois admiration of the novels of Thomas Wolfe and Theodore Dreiser. On a lower intellectual level we find it in the long popularity of that curious underground work *The Fountainhead*. On a higher intellectual level we find it in certain aspects of the work of Yeats and Lawrence. We find it too, if not in our religion itself, then at least in one of our dominant conceptions of religion—to many intellectuals the violence of Dostoevsky represents the natural form of the religious life, to many gentle spirits the ferocity of Léon Bloy seems quite appropriate to the way of faith; and although some years ago Mr. Eliot reprobated D. H. Lawrence, in the name of religion, for his addiction to this characteristic violence, yet for Mr. Eliot the equally violent Baudelaire is preeminently a Christian poet.

Now obviously I am not speaking against a sense of urgency or immediacy, or against power or passion. Nor would I be taken to mean that the Wordsworthian quietism I have described is the whole desideratum of the emotional life. It obviously wasn't that for Wordsworth himself—he may be said to be the first poet who praised movement and speed for their own sakes, and dizziness and danger; he is the poet of rapture. No one can read Book Five of *The Prelude* and remain unaware of Wordsworth's conception of literature as urgency and immediacy, as power and passion. Book Five, which is about literature and the place of reading in our spiritual development, opens with an impressive eschatological vision, a vision of final events —Wordsworth shared in his own way our present sense of the possible end of man and of all the works of man's spirit. It is in this book that Wordsworth defends the violence and fearfulness of literature from the "progressive" ideas of his day; it is here that he speaks of the poet as "crazed/By love and feeling, and internal thought/Protracted among endless solitude," and of the "reason" that lies couched "in the blind and awful lair" of the poet's madness; and it is here that he defends the "maniac's" dedication at the cost of the domestic affections:

Enow there are on earth to take in charge
Their wives, their children, and their virgin loves,
Or whatsoever else the heart holds dear;
Enow to stir for these. . . .

As we speak of Wordsworth's quietism the opposite element in his poetry must of course be borne in mind.

And yet the fact remains that there is in Wordsworth a quality that is very close to the Stoic *apatheia*, to not-feeling—which makes it the more significant to remember what great particular thing he is said to have accomplished. Matthew Arnold said that in a wintry clime, in an iron time, Wordsworth taught us to *feel*. This statement, extreme as it is, will be seen to be

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not inaccurate if we bring to mind the many instances of spiritual and psychological crisis in the 19th century in which affectlessness, the loss of the power to feel, played an important part. *Ennui, noia*—how often we meet with them in 19th-century biography; and the *acedia* which was once a disorder of the specifically religious life became now a commonplace of secular spirituality. And yet, although Arnold's statement is accurate so far as it goes, and is supported by Wordsworth's own sense of the overarching intention of his poetic enterprise, it does not go far enough. Wordsworth did, or tried to do, more than make us feel: he undertook to teach us how to *be*.

In *The Prelude*, in Book Two, Wordsworth speaks of a particular emotion which he calls "the sentiment of Being." The "sentiment" has been described in this way: "There is, in sanest hours, a consciousness, a thought that rises, independent, lifted out from all else, calm, like the stars, shining eternal. This is the thought of identity—yours for you, whoever you are, as mine for me. Miracle of miracles, beyond statement, most spiritual and vaguest of earth's dreams, yet hardest basic fact, and only entrance to all facts." This, of course, is not Wordsworth, it is Walt Whitman, but I quote Whitman's statement in exposition of Wordsworth's "sentiment of Being" because it is in some respects rather more boldly explicit, although not necessarily better, than anything that Wordsworth himself wrote about the sentiment, and because Whitman goes on to speak of his "hardest basic fact" as a political fact, as the basis, and the criterion, of democracy.

Through all his poetic life Wordsworth was preoccupied by the idea, by the sentiment, by the problem, of being. All experience, all emotions lead to it. He was haunted by the mysterious fact that he existed. He could discover in himself different intensities and qualities of being—"Tintern Abbey" is the attempt to distinguish these intensities and qualities. Being is sometimes animal; sometimes it is an "appetite and a passion"; sometimes it is almost a suspension of the movement of the breath and blood. The *Lyrical Ballads* have many intentions, but one of the chief of them is the investigation of the problems of being. "We Are Seven," which is always under the imputation of bathos, is established in its true nature when we read it as an ontological poem; its subject is the question, What does it mean when we say a person *is*? "The Idiot Boy," which I believe to be a great and not a foolish poem, is a kind of comic assertion of the actuality—and, indeed, the peculiar intensity—of being in a person who is outside the range of anything but our merely mechanical understanding. Wordsworth has an almost obsessive concern to put being to the test in situations where its presence may perhaps most easily be questioned—in very old people. We are all of us aware from our own experience what a strain very old people put upon our powers of attributing to them personal being, "identity." Wordsworth's usual way is to represent the old man as being below the human condition, apparently scarcely able to communicate, and then suddenly, startlingly, in what we have learned to call an "epiphany," to show forth the intensity of his human existence.

THE social and political implication of Wordsworth's preoccupation with ontology is obvious enough. It is not, however, quite what Wordsworth sometimes says it is. The explicit political lesson that the poet draws from the Old Cumberland Beggar is interesting, but it is beside his real, his essential, point. "Deem not this man useless," the poet says in his apostrophe to the political theorists who have it in mind to put the Beggar into a workhouse, and he represents the usefulness of the Beggar as consisting in his serving as the object of a habitual charity and thus as a kind of communal institution, a communal bond. But this demonstrated utility of the Beggar is really secondary to the fact that he *is*. He is a person, he takes a pleasure, even though a minimal one, in his being. Therefore he may not in conscience be dealt with as a mere social unit. So with all the dramatis personae of the *Lyrical Ballads*—the intention of the poet is to require us to acknowledge their being and thus to bring them within the range of conscience, and of something more immediate than conscience, natural sympathy. It is an attractive thing about Wordsworth, and it should be a reassuring thing, that his acute sense of the being of others derives from, and serves to affirm and heighten, his acute sense of his own being.

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I realize that I am speaking of Wordsworth's preoccupation with being as if it were unique and as if it accounted for, or led to what accounts for, the contemporary alienation from his work and his personality. And indeed in some ways his preoccupation *is* unique, and certain aspects of it do lead to the present alienation from him. Yet from what I have said about him, it must be clear that between Wordsworth and the great figures of our literature there is a very close affinity, if only in this one regard of the preoccupation with being. There is scarcely a great writer of our own day who has not addressed himself to the ontological crisis, who has not conceived of life as a struggle to be—not to live, but to be. To be sure, the writers of our epoch operate under a necessity rather different from Wordsworth's. They feel the necessity to affirm the personal qualities that are associated with a former time, presumably a freer and more personally privileged time—they wish, as a character in one of Yeats's plays says, "to bring back the old disturbed exalted life, the old splendor." Their image of freedom and personal privilege is often associated with violence, sometimes of a kind that does not always command the ready assent we are habituated to give to violence when it appears in moral or spiritual contexts. A tenant's sliced-off ear, which is an object of at least momentary pleasure to Yeats, a kick given by an employer to his employee, which wins the approval of Lawrence—these are all too accurately representative of the nature of the political and social fantasies that Yeats and Lawrence could build upon their perception of the loss of freedom and privilege, the loss of the sense of being. Yet we know that this violence stands against an extreme fate of which we are all conscious. We really know in our time what the death of the word can be—for that knowledge we have only to read an account of contemporary Russian literature. We really know what the death of the spirit means—we have seen it overtake whole peoples. Nor do we need to go beyond our own daily lives to become aware, if we dare to, of how we have conspired, in our very virtues, to bring about the devaluation of whatever is bold and assertive and free, replacing it by the bland, the covert, the manipulative. If we wish to understand the violence of so much of our literature, we have only to consider that we must endure not only the threat to being which comes from without but also the seduction to non-being which establishes itself within. We need, in Coleridge's words, something to "startle this dull pain, and make it move and live." Violence is a means of self-definition; the bad conscience, Nietzsche says, assures us of our existence.

Wordsworth, then, is not separated from us by his preoccupation with being, for it is our preoccupation. Yet he is separated from us. His conception of being seems different from ours.

In Book Five of *The Prelude* Wordsworth gives us a satiric picture of the boy educated according to the "progressive" ideas of his day, and on the whole we follow him readily enough in the objections he makes to these ideas—when he speaks of the presumptuousness of pedagogical theorists, denouncing them as, in effect, engineers of the spirit, he flatters at least one element of our ambivalence toward the psychological expert. We are responsive to his notion of what a boy should be: "not . . . too good," "not unresentful where self-justified." Possibly we are not in perfect agreement with him on all points—perhaps we will feel that he has dealt rather too harshly with the alert political and social consciousness of the progressive child, or that he goes too far in thinking that a child's imagination should be fed on fanciful books; perhaps, too, the qualities of the boys he really admires would not be precisely the qualities we would specify—"Fierce, moody, patient, venturous, modest, shy." But on the whole, whatever our reservations about details, his discussion of pedagogics appeals to the enlightened muddled concern with "adjustment" and "aggression" which occupies the PTA segment of our minds. Where, I think, we cease to follow him is when, in the course of his argument, he rises to one of his great poetical moments. This is the passage "There was a Boy. . . ." which follows the description of the model child. The Boy is described as having had a trick of imitating the hooting of owls, and at night he would call across Windermere, trying to get the owls to answer; and often they did answer, but sometimes they did not, and then the silence would be strange and significant.

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. . . In that silence, while he hung
Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
Has carried far into his heart the voice
Of mountain torrents; or the visible scene
Would enter unawares into his mind,
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven, received
Into the bosom of the steady lake.

We may be ready enough to acknowledge the "beauty" of the passage, but the chances are that we will be rather baffled by its intention. We perceive that the Boy is obviously intended to represent something very good and right, meant to be an example of very full being. But what baffles us, what makes us wonder what the poem has to do with education and the development of personality, is that the Boy exercises no will, or at least, when his playful will is frustrated, is at once content with the pleasures that follow upon the suspended will. And as likely as not we will be impelled to refer the poem to that "mysticism" which is supposed to be an element of Wordsworth's mind.

Now Wordsworth's mind does have an element of mysticism—it is that "normal mysticism" which, according to a recent writer on the Rabbis, marked the rabbinical mind.* Wordsworth's mysticism, if we wish to call it that, consists of two elements, his conception of the world as being semantic, and his capacity for intense pleasure. When we speak of him as a mystic in any other sense, we are pretty sure to be expressing our incomprehension of the intensity with which he experienced his own being, and our incomprehension of the relation which his sentiment of being bore to his will.

Thus, we have no trouble understanding him when, in Book Six of *The Prelude,* in the remarkable episode of the crossing of the Alps, he speaks of the glory of the will:

. . . Whether we be young or old,
Our destiny, our being's heart and home,
Is with infinitude, and only there;
With hope it is, hope that can never die,
Effort, and expectation, and desire,
And something evermore about to be.

The note on which the will is affirmed is high, Miltonic—it echoes the accents of Satan's speech in the Council of Hell; and the passage resumes its movement with a line the martial tenor of which we happily respond to: "Under such banners militant, the soul . . ." But we are checked by what ensues:

Under such banners militant, the soul
Seeks for no trophies, struggles for no spoils
That may attest her prowess, blest in thoughts
That are their own perfection and reward,
Strong in herself and in beatitude. . . .

The soul's energy is directed to the delight of the soul in itself.

Wordsworth is describing the action of what, at a later time, a man of very different mind, Hegel, was to call a new human faculty, the faculty of *Gemüt.* The word, I gather, is not entirely susceptible of translation—"heart," with the implication of responsiveness, and of high-heartedness and large-heartedness, is an approximation. Hegel defines his faculty of *Gemüt* as expressing itself as a desire, a will, which has "no particular aims, such as riches, honors, and the like; in fact, it does not concern itself with any worldly condition of wealth, prestige, etc., but with the entire condition of the soul—a general sense of enjoyment." Much that I have said about the tendency of our culture would seem to deny the truth of Hegel's statement that *Gemüt* is one of the characteristics of our time, and much more evidence might be adduced to confirm the impression that nothing could be less characteristic of our time than the faculty of *Gemüt,* that we scarcely conceive of it, let alone exercise it. Yet at the same time I think it is true to say that it plays in our culture a covert but very important part.

*Max Kadushin, *The Rabbinic Mind* (New York, 1951). This impressive work of scholarship has received far less general notice than it deserves. I read it after I had written this essay—read it not only with admiration for its intellectual achievement but also with a peculiar personal pleasure, because its author, in his seminary days, had been one of the long-suffering men who tried to teach me Hebrew, with what success I have indicated; yet he did teach me—it was no small thing for a boy of twelve to be in relation with a serious scholar. Dr. Kadushin has been kind enough to tell me that what I have said about the Rabbis is not wrong. In revising my essay I have not tried to amend my primitive account by what is to be learned from Dr. Kadushin's presentation of the Rabbis in all their great complexity of thought. But the phrase "normal mysticism" seemed too apt not to quote.

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OF OUR negative response to *Gemüt*, to the "sentiment of Being," Mr. Eliot provides an instance—again, for it is Mr. Eliot's high gift to be as pertinent when we think him wrong as when we think him right. In *The Cocktail Party* there is a description of two virtuous ways of life, that of "the common routine" and that of the spiritual heroism of the saint and martyr. The two ways, Mr. Eliot tells us, are of equal value; the way of the saint is not better than that of the householder. Yet when it comes to describing the life of the common routine, Mr. Eliot says of those who elect it that they

Learn to avoid excessive expectation,
Become tolerant of themselves and others,
Giving and taking in the usual actions
What there is to give and take. They do not repine;
And are contented with the morning that separates
And with the evening that brings together
For casual talk before the fire
Two people who know that they do not understand each other,
Breeding children whom they do not understand
And who will never understand them.

Well, few of us will want to say much for the life of the common routine, and no doubt, under the aspect of modern life with its terrible fatigues, and in the consciousness of its gross threats, the sort of thing that Mr. Eliot says here will be pretty nearly all that any of us will want to say. Yet if we think of the description of the common routine as being not merely the expression of one possible mood among many—and it is not merely that: it is what it says it is, the description of a "way"—we must find it very strange. There is in it no reference to the pain which is an essential and not an accidental part of the life of the common routine. There is no reference to the principles, the ethical discipline, by which the ordinary life is governed—all is habit. There is no reference to the possibility of either joy or glory—I use the Wordsworthian words by intention. The possibility of *Gemüt* does not appear. Mr. Eliot does not say that his couples are in Limbo, which would of course be a true thing to say of many householding couples: he is describing the virtuous way of life that is alternative to the way of the saint.

This failure to conceive the actuality of the life of common routine is typical of modern literature since, say, Tolstoy. I do not say this in order to suggest that domestic life, the common routine, in itself makes an especially appropriate subject for literature—I don't think it does—but in order to suggest a limitation of our conception of the spiritual life. Mr. Eliot's representation of the two "ways" exemplifies how we are drawn to the violence of extremity. We imagine, with nothing in between, the dull not-being of life, the intense not-being of death; but we do not imagine being—we do not imagine that it can be a joy. We are in love, at least in our literature, with the fantasy of death. Death and suffering, when we read, are our only means of conceiving the actuality of life.

Perhaps this is not new and we are merely making more intense what is indigenous in our culture. Perhaps this is in the nature of life as Western culture has long been fated to see it. Perhaps it is inescapable for us that the word "tragic" should be used as an ultimate recommendation of a sense of life. Yet we, when we use the word, do not really mean it in its old, complex, mysterious sense—we mean something like "violent" or "conclusive": we mean death. And just here lies a paradox and our point. For it is precisely what Wordsworth implies by his passionate insistence on being, even at a very low level of consciousness, pride, and assertiveness, as well as at the highest level of quasi-mystic intensity, that validates a conception of tragedy, and a conception of heroism. The saintly martyrdom which Mr. Eliot represents in his play is of course not intended to be taken as tragic: the idea of martyrdom precludes the idea of tragedy. But if we ask why the martyrdom seems as factitious as it does, must we not answer that this is because it is presented in a system of feeling which sets very little store by—which, indeed, denies the possibility of—the "beatitude" which Wordsworth thought was the birthright of every human soul? And this seems to be borne out by the emphasis which Mr. Eliot puts on the peculiar horror of the mode of the martyr's death, as if only by an extremity of pain could we be made to realize that a *being* was actually involved, that a life has been sacrificed—or, indeed, has been lived.

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Wordsworth's incapacity for tragedy has often been remarked on, and accurately enough. Yet we cannot conclude that Wordsworth's relation to tragedy is wholly negative. The possibility of tragic art depends primarily upon the worth we ascribe not to dying but to living, and to living in "the common routine." The power of the Homeric tragedy, for example, derives from the pathos, which the poet is at pains to bring before us repeatedly, of young men dying, of not seeing ever again the trees of their native farmsteads, of their parents never again admiring and indulging them, of the cessation of their being in the common routine. And I think it can be shown that every tragic literature owes its power to the high esteem in which it holds the common routine, and the sentiment of being which arises from it, the elemental *given* of biology. And that is what Wordsworth had in mind when, in the "Preface" of 1800, defending the idea that poetry should give "immediate pleasure," he said that this idea was "a homage paid to the native and naked dignity of man, to the grand elementary principle of pleasure, by which he knows, and feels, and lives, and moves."

YET if we are aware of the tendency of our literature I have exemplified by the passage from Mr. Eliot's play, we must at the same time be aware of the equally strong counter-tendency. In speaking of our alienation from Wordsworth, it has not been my intention to make a separation between Wordsworth and the literature of our time. The separation cannot be made. Wordsworth and the great writers of our time stand, as I have said, on the common ground of the concern with being and its problems—Wordsworth, indeed, may be said to have discovered and first explored the ground upon which our literature has established itself. Our preference for the apocalyptic subject and the charismatic style do indeed constitute a taste which alienates many readers from Wordsworth, and no doubt the more if we believe, as some do, that it is a taste wholly appropriate to the actualities of our historical situation. Yet we can without too much difficulty become aware of how much of the Wordsworthian "mildness," which so readily irritates us, and how much of the Wordsworthian quietism (as I have called it), which dismays us, are in the grain of our literature, expressed through the very intensities which seem to deny them.

Thus, to bring Wordsworth and James Joyce into conjunction might at first seem a joke or a paradox, or an excess of historicism, at best a mere device of criticism. We will at once be conscious of the calculated hauteur of Joyce's implied personality, the elaborations of his irony, the uncompromising challenge of his style and his manner, and by the association of contrast we will remember that horrendous moment in *The Prelude* when Wordsworth says, "My drift I fear/Is scarcely obvious." How can we fail to think only of the abysses of personality, theory, and culture that separate the two men? And yet when we have become acclimated to Joyce, do we not find that we are involved in a conception of life that reiterates, in however different a tonality, the Wordsworthian vision? One of the striking things about *Ulysses* (to speak only of that work) is that the idea of evil plays so small a part in it. One hears a good deal about the essential Christian orthodoxy of Joyce, and perhaps this is an accurate opinion, but his orthodoxy, if he has it, takes no account of the evil which is so commonly affirmed by the literary expressions of orthodoxy; the conception of sin has but a tangential relevance to the book. The element of sexuality which plays so large a part in the story does not raise considerations of sin and evil; it is dealt with in the way of poetic naturalism. The character of Leopold Bloom, who figures in the life of Joyce's Poet much as the old men in Wordsworth figure in his life—met by chance and giving help of some transcendent yet essentially human kind—is conceived in Wordsworthian terms: in terms, that is, of his humbleness of spirit. If we speak of Wordsworth in reference to the Rabbis and their non-militancy, their indifference to the idea of evil, their acceptance of cosmic contradiction, are we not to say that Bloom is a Rabbinical character? It is exactly his non-militancy that makes him the object of general contempt and, on one occasion, of rage. It is just this that has captivated his author, as the contrast with the armed pride, the jealousy and desire for prestige, the bitter militancy of Stephen Dedalus. Leopold Bloom is deprived of every shred of dignity except the dignity of that innocence which

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for Joyce, as for Wordsworth, goes with the "sentiment of Being."

Again and again in our literature, at its most apocalyptic and intense, we find the impulse to create figures who are intended to suggest that life is justified in its elemental biological simplicity, and, in the manner of Wordsworth, these figures are conceived of as being of humble status and humble heart: Lawrence's simpler people or primitive people whose pride is only that of plants or animals; Dreiser's Jennie Gerhardt and Mrs. Griffiths, who stand as oases in the wide waste of their creator's dull representation of energy; Hemingway's waiters with their curious silent dignity; Faulkner's Negroes, of whom it is said, as so often it is said in effect of Wordsworth's people, *they endured;* and Faulkner's idiot boys, of whom it is to be said, *they are*—the list could be extended to suggest how great is the affinity of our literature with Wordsworth. And these figures express an intention which is to be discerned through all our literature—the intention to imagine, and to reach, a condition of the soul in which the will is freed from "particular aims," in which it is "strong in itself and in beatitude." At least as early as Balzac our literature has shown the will seeking its own negation—or, rather, seeking its own affirmation by its rejection of the aims which the world sets before it and by turning its energies upon itself in self-realization. Of this particular affirmation of the will Wordsworth is the proponent and the poet.

ARISTOBULUS

CONSTANTINE CAVAFY

THERE is weeping in the palace, the king is weeping;
disconsolately King Herod mourns;
all the city is lamenting for Aristobulus
so unjustly drowned accidentally
while playing in the water with his friends.

When they will hear of it in other parts,
once the news reaches the borders of Syria
many will mourn among the Greeks.
Poets and sculptors alike will grieve,
for they have heard of Aristobulus
and what youth stirred their imagination
with such beauty as this child?
what image of a god did Antioch hold dearer
than this son of Israel?

She wails, she weeps, the royal princess,
his mother, the greatest of the Jewesses.
She weeps, Alexandra, and bewails her misfortune
but once she is alone how her grief changes.
Then she moans, she rages, she scolds, she curses. . . .
How they are laughing at her! How she has been fooled!
How their plot has succeeded at last!
All in shambles lies the Hasmonean house!
How he has succeeded, that scoundrel of a king,
the sly, the treacherous, wicked king.
How he has succeeded! What an infernal plot
that even Mariamne got wind of nothing.
Had she but known or suspected something
she surely would have found a way to save her brother,
for after all she is queen, she could have done. . . .
How they triumph now and secretly rejoice
those wretched creatures, Cyprus and Salome,
those common sluts, Cyprus and Salome.
Alas, to be so helpless and be forced
to pretend to believe their lies,
to be unable to come out to the people,
to come out and cry out to the assembled Jews
and shout aloud: "Murder, foul murder, has been done! . . ."

THIS is the second poem that we print by Constantine Cavafy. The first, "Alexander Jannai," appeared in our issue of last August; both were translated by Simon Chasen. Cavafy, born in 1863, is regarded as the foremost modern Greek poet. He spent most of his life in Alexandria, Egypt, and died in 1933.

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HOW TO REMEDY OUR "PUERTO RICAN PROBLEM"

Whence It Arose: What to Do

CHARLES ABRAMS

EVERY day a few hundred Puerto Ricans can be seen at the San Juan airport waiting to get on planes for New York. There are women with babies, young people and old, some colored, some white. Suitcases and crude bundles are by their sides. There are gesticulations, the bustle of hurried farewells, some tears. Soon a roar of engines signals another departure from America's teeming little island in the Caribbean—and another group added to the teeming sidewalks and tenements of New York City.

The Puerto Rican journey is unique in the record of mass movement to this continent. It is a six and a half hour trip by air, not the arduous two to three weeks' sea voyage from Europe of half a century ago. Return to Puerto Rico is easy and swift, and since living here is uncomfortable and the chances of establishing a secure foothold uncertain, the pull-back to the island continues strong and the stay on the mainland is as likely to be temporary as permanent. The number of Puerto Ricans here at any one time is therefore small in proportion to the total of those who come and go.*

If, instead of moving out over the country, the Puerto Rican has concentrated in a single port of entry, one reason is that ease of exit is often in his mind. The uncertainty of the migrant's position and the tensions in his new environment cause him to think of himself as a transient; he is in turn treated as a transient, undesired and undesirable; in the end, he *becomes* a transient.

Although the Puerto Rican influx is thought of as an immigration, it is, properly speaking, an internal migration, i.e., a movement within the United States, not of aliens, but of citizens. And this migration is unique in another respect. These Puerto Rican citizens, in an era of unprecedented mobility, are being limited by official policy in their opportunity to seek employment freely. This, coupled with local housing restrictions and the Puerto Rican's own unwillingness to challenge such restrictions, limits his free movement into other areas of opportunity.

BY AND large, however, whether migrant or immigrant, the Puerto Rican comes into New York City much as did the immigrant from Southern Europe up to forty

IF THE Puerto Rican migration to New York City has taken on the aspects of a "problem," the responsibility belongs more to mainland Americans than to our American fellow citizens of the Islands. The problem itself, says CHARLES ABRAMS here, is a reflection on our supposed capacity for social solutions; and the general tendency of officialdom and plain citizens alike to avert their eyes from the problem and hush it up reflects on our social conscience, too. Mr. Abrams's article is aimed at helping "break the problem wide open with the view of setting people to discuss it in order to find a solution, or solutions, that will permit our new neighbors to contribute their humanity as well as their labor to the community." Mr. Abrams, New York State's new Rent Administrator, is an old and steady contributor to COMMENTARY; he has written widely on housing and other social problems and has two books already to his credit—*Revolution in Land* and *The Future of Housing*—and Harper will publish another one, *Forbidden Neighbors*, next month. The present article draws on material from that book, as did Mr. Abrams's article "Only the Very Best Christian Clientele" in our January number.

*Between 1940 and mid-1953 there were more than 1,850,000 in-migrants and about 1,430,000 out-migrants, but since they included tourists, businessmen, and students, the number of those who came to stay and returned is unknown. Curiously, no surveys have been taken at the airports to determine the precise reasons for departures.

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years ago. The Puerto Rican has left his home so that he can better his lot by his labor, and the United States urgently needs the labor he can supply, at the wages he gets. But once here, he is left to fend for himself, since the society that needs his labor prefers to forget about him as a human being. Consequently, there is a Puerto Rican "problem," just as there was an immigrant "problem" half a century ago. Yet the fact that today the "problem" is recognized and named does not mean that anything fundamental is being done about it, or that its causes are understood.

It is no wonder, then, that more than half the 500,000 Puerto Ricans now in New York City would like to return to their island if only they could support themselves and their families there. And no wonder, too, that so many of them do return in spite of everything, and that in 1954 net migration from Puerto Rico fell from 69,124 the year before to 21,531—a drop of 68.8 per cent. This drop emphasizes the trailing off, for the time being at least, of a movement that started with only a few thousand a year in 1940 and had spiraled by 1953 to a point where one in every twenty New Yorkers was a Puerto Rican.

What has turned the Puerto Rican migration into a "problem" is not its size—there were probably never more than 575,000 non-visitor Puerto Ricans on the mainland. By comparison, there are 15,000,000 Negroes here, and no less than 2,700,000 Negroes migrated from one state to another between 1940 and 1947, with 1,180,000 of these moving between non-contiguous states. Between 1942 and 1947, the Federal government itself brought in 219,500 Mexicans. In 1950, the known "Wetback" traffic was ten times as great as the net Puerto Rican immigration, and many "Wetbacks" have become a permanent part of the rural working force. Puerto Rico's whole population, which amounts to 2,250,000, could be absorbed in America's expanding economy within a few years without causing any more strain than the absorption of like numbers of immigrants has in the past.

THE factors that make up the Puerto Rican problem are: first, the overwhelming concentration of Puerto Ricans in one place—New York City—and the sordid conditions under which they are forced to live there; second, the circumstances that make it difficult for newcomers to establish *secure* footholds over here, thus preventing them from becoming an organic part of the community; last, but not less important, Puerto Rico's own difficulties as an overcrowded area suffering from low living standards, limited economic opportunities, and mass unemployment.

To the majority of Puerto Ricans, New York and the United States are synonymous. New York is where friends and relatives live, where the home language is spoken, where the air lanes end. Riding the air to the new utopia, the migrants have visions of magic casements opening on electric refrigerators, flush toilets, and bathtubs. But the skyscrapers that greet the migrant from afar soon fade into the dark and dirty tenement neighborhood that becomes his new horizon.

In the last twelve months I have traveled some 75,000 miles on housing missions for the United Nations. With some embarrassment, I have had to conclude that the slums in Harlem where most Puerto Ricans have found shelter are among the worst in the world. In the sub-marginal areas of Asia and Africa economic conditions are, of course, critical. But the housing problem is often less critical. There is the redeeming feature of a warm climate; the crowding per acre is usually less; there is often an external environment that offsets the squalor within the house itself. Amid all the poverty, there is a semblance of a community and a community life. All this holds true for the slums of San Juan and Ponce, too, whence most of the Puerto Rican migrants to the United States come.

In Harlem, however, there is little or no community life for the Puerto Ricans, and overcrowding is so intense that family morale and family structure are virtually impossible to sustain—a factor responsible for the large number of Spanish names

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in the Family Court and in Youth Term. Living in a cold climate, a strange environment, and threatened with homelessness should he miss a single rental payment, the migrant must make a superhuman effort if he is to sink any kind of roots at all here and maintain them.

In Harlem I saw a six-story, 25-foot-wide tenement on East 100th Street in which 170 Puerto Ricans were living. Rents were about $16 a month per room; the apartments were shared; 12 people were living in one three-room apartment. Every hall window was broken. Splintered stair treads sank perilously with each step. Almost every toilet was out of order. Plaster hung from the hall ceilings; great heaps of garbage rotted under the stairways; a dead rat lay on a landing. There were 481 officially reported cases of rat bites in New York in 1952, and since it is estimated that only one in five cases is reported, this means that some 2,500 human beings—mostly babies—are bitten by rats every year. Most of these cases are reported from the Harlem slums.

In another ancient tenement on the same street there were 15 people in a four-room apartment; in another, 18 people occupied a three-room unit. On East 108th Street, two stores were being used as living quarters, a condition now common throughout the city. The tenants said they paid $28 monthly per store. The plate glass was broken, the windows boarded up. There were no closets, no lights, no baths. Clothes were laid on trunks or on the floor. Children slept in cold, dark, and airless space, separated from their parents by makeshift curtains.

On East 100th Street I found 25 people living in a dark and airless coal cellar ten feet below street level. The cellar was divided into two vaults—one under the sidewalk, the other in the rear—and had once stored old furniture and garbage cans. Each vault was divided by brick walls into what had originally been coal bins, and in each bin now lived a family. Iron cellar doors at sidewalk level kept out both light and air. Here these people ate, slept, washed, and reproduced. There were 17 children, the youngest born two weeks before. Almost all of the children had been sick during the preceding weeks. One had been hospitalized only a few days before. One of the mothers was confined to her bed under the sidewalk while trying to feed, clothe, and care for her children.

In Brooklyn and elsewhere, flimsy one-family firetraps shelter ten or more families, each herded into a single room and doing its own cooking on a coal or oil stove. (There were more than 600 fires caused by kerosene-oil stoves in New York City in 1953.) Even minimum accommodations in these neighborhoods cannot be got without paying key-money, or several hundred dollars down and a ransom rental thereafter.

BAD as the situation is for the white Puerto Rican, it is worse for the colored. New York City has a famous skyline, and an equally famous color-line. Both have occasional rainbows, like the city's inter-racial housing program and anti-bias laws. But, though New York City is one of the nation's most tolerant places, it has never been able to put an end to housing discrimination.

Migration transforms the darker Puerto Rican into an American Negro—even among his own lighter countrymen, who soon learn that difference in color means difference in status. The colored migrants have fewer opportunities and less incentive to become part of the mainland culture. Their only chance is to look and act conspicuously different from the native Negro.

But there is housing bias against most Puerto Ricans—light and dark. The "Spic," as the Spanish-speaking slum-dweller is scornfully called, is rated a less desirable tenant than the native Negro, whose pattern of infiltration, inundation, and outspread he is being forced to follow. And he is meeting even greater resistance. Most landlords with a long-term interest in their property can never be sure as to how many people will eventually live in an apartment rented to a Puerto Rican, whether his job or his stay is permanent, and whether he will have enough left from his earnings to pay the rent. Used

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to sharing huts at home in Puerto Rico, the new arrivals tend to follow the practice in New York, if only for the sake of economy.

There are landlords, big and little, who make a specialty of buying slum properties for Puerto Rican occupancy because they yield 30 to 100 per cent a year on investment. Some of these landlords are veteran operators attracted by the high yields; others are profiteering tenants who have branched out into landlordism; still others are small-time lessees seeking to recover their investment in one or two years by exacting illicit bonuses and charging all the traffic will bear. Houses that rent to Puerto Ricans bring high returns because repairs are never made; because the legitimate real-estate investor and mortgage-lender generally shuns such ventures, which eliminates a good deal of competition; because the owners (some of them shoestring operators or lessees from the minority groups themselves) are willing to run the risks of operating properties plastered with violations, and have mastered the technique of evading rent controls and dodging or appeasing housing inspectors. Strict enforcement by city officials of violation notices is difficult since the tenants have no alternative accommodations when the houses are ordered vacated. Prosecution in the courts has become a tedious and often impossible task.

A grand jury investigating the death of seven Puerto Ricans living in an illegally occupied Brooklyn tinderbox in 1952 reported:

> Shocked as we were by the death of seven persons, we were more appalled as the evidence adduced before us disclosed that the greatest city in the world is surely but not slowly being permitted to deteriorate and decay. . . . Occupancy of dark, damp and filthy cellars that defy description, and families, of six, seven and more, cooking and eating and sleeping in one room lacking proper toilet facilities, are spreading the slum blight.

Officials of the Migration Division of the Puerto Rican Labor Department in New York City have tried to minimize the situation by pointing to past immigration. But conditions for the Puerto Rican migrants are far worse than they were for the immigrant in New York or Chicago in the 19th and early 20th century. There was the frontier as an escape. Housing could be built on free land through self-help, often with materials freely available nearby. In New York City, new, if sub-standard, tenements were built in the last century that provided housing at rents the immigrants could afford. Nothing of the sort is being done for the Puerto Ricans.

Nor does there seem to be a ready solution to the Puerto Rican housing problem in New York. Limiting the number of persons per room and strict enforcement of violations would only mean more evictions. New York's combined city, state, and Federal postwar housing program, designed mainly to replace slums, and producing some 6,500 dwelling units a year, has become meaningless in the face of the influx of new candidates for its slums. It has added little to the over-all housing supply and even if doubled will mean little, if migration from Puerto Rico continues even at its current reduced rate.

Worse still, the city's policy of tearing down overcrowded areas in the name of "slum clearance," instead of building on vacant land, is dislodging almost a quarter of a million slum-dwellers from their homes. Instead of relieving overcrowding, it is intensifying it; instead of diminishing slums, it is spreading them elsewhere; instead of easing the housing shortage, it is worsening it; instead of aiding Puerto Rican adjustment, it is frustrating it.

THOUGH New Yorkers are apt to grumble about their new neighbors, the Puerto Rican immigration has been a boon to employers, bringing a rich supply of the cheap labor, skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled, they so urgently need. Less than 8 per cent of those on relief in the city, in 1953, were Puerto Ricans. About 20,000 Puerto Ricans, mostly women, have been absorbed by the garment industry, and about 16,000 men by hotels and restaurants, while tens of thousands of others have found light factory work

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or employment in building and domestic service. The Puerto Ricans have earned the respect of employers and are considered dependable employees. They are, however, among the lowest paid of all workers in the city, and easily exploited because so few of them know about the 75-cent minimum hourly wage.

Despite their handicaps, many of the earlier migrants from Puerto Rico have been able to make some sort of an adjustment, and have succeeded in breaking through to the Central Park West section, Chelsea, the Bronx, and Brooklyn. However, the overcrowding of some of these areas, and the inundation of the schools with Puerto Rican children, have spread resentment and caused older residents to move away.

Although four of every five of the migrants from Puerto Rico stop in New York City, small clusters of them are to be found now in Bridgeport, Newark, Passaic, the Philadelphia area, Pittsburgh, Buffalo, Youngstown, Cleveland, Lorain, Gary, Chicago, Aurora, Joliet, Savannah, and Milwaukee. These clusters, if they stay, should in time draw more Puerto Ricans, and there is evidence of permanent settlement in some of these areas. But all too often the migrants slip back to the island at the first signs of hardship.

In Youngstown, Ohio, the Puerto Rican community was about 3,000 in the summer of 1953. By November 1954, after steel production had been cut, half the community departed. The airline records show that almost all the workers returned to Puerto Rico. In other areas where Puerto Ricans are sent for jobs without their families, loneliness drives them back to the island or to the metropolis.

THE Puerto Rican migration is rural as well as urban at its source. Yet, though agriculture is Puerto Rico's main activity, and, in 1950, 60 per cent of its population lived outside the towns and cities, nine-tenths of the migrants to the United States are from urban places. Moreover, while farm workers are in constant demand on the mainland, and unemployment on the island is greatest in agriculture, only a trickle of Puerto Rican agricultural labor settles in the United States permanently; such migration as there is, is largely seasonal, comprising some 15,000 farm workers who come in the spring and return in the fall, when their contracts are finished. Only a few thousand other farm workers arrive without contracts.

There are several reasons for the mainland's failure to draw off Puerto Rico's excess farm population. One is the American policy of preferring aliens to citizens for agricultural labor. American fruit, vegetable, and tobacco growers employ workers from the British West Indies and from Mexico by permission of the U. S. Employment Service, which supervises the flow of contract labor to the United States. These foreign workers are simply sent home when the season is over. Moreover, as aliens, they are more vulnerable in the event of disagreement over wages, work, and shelter. Puerto Ricans, as citizens, can in principle assert their rights to go where they choose and claim the same social benefits as other Americans. Puerto Rican farmhands might drift to cities and seek jobs there when their work on the land was finished; this, it was apparently feared, would create a "minority problem" that would bring pressure on their erstwhile employers from the authorities of the cities and towns concerned.

To meet the problem, the U.S. Employment Service and the Puerto Rican government have an agreement under which no Puerto Rican contract labor will be sent to any state unless the state director of employment certifies that a shortage of labor exists there. Puerto Rico's Bureau of Employment and Migration considers it as its duty to regulate the flow of migration to the mainland in order to prevent migrants from dislocating "the American workers who are already in the areas to which they migrate."

The Puerto Rican government asserts that this certification agreement protects the worker against unscrupulous farmers and agents. It might. But the Puerto Rican himself still comes last. Priorities go to aliens

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who do not have to wait for certification—nor, of course, do American citizens on the mainland. Thus the Puerto Rican waits his turn after other American citizens, after Mexicans (legal and illegal), and after West Indians.

As it is, the easing of Puerto Rico's overpopulation is being accomplished, not through a permanent rural emigration followed by a gradual absorption into the mainland economy, but by a concentrated urban migration that drains off the island's skilled and semi-skilled labor, and is aimed almost exclusively at New York City. One reason offered for the overwhelming concentration in New York is that newcomers are usually apt to go where their friends are. Another reason given is the housing shortage throughout the country. A third is the unfamiliarity of many Puerto Ricans with the English language—a handicap not shared by the Negro.

These reasons do hold, of course. But there are other reasons that are not usually emphasized: the failure to encourage enough cheap air trips to other parts of the United States; the much exaggerated fear of encountering neighborhood opposition in the North or discriminatory treatment in the South; the failure of the Puerto Ricans themselves to develop the leaders and leadership needed for a planned migration.

The Puerto Rican government itself has chosen a policy of caution. It not only limits farm contract labor to the precise number certified by state authorities, but also functions as the principal employment agent and advisor for its subjects already here, thereby retaining some control over their movements. It is afraid of what may happen to Puerto Ricans in places that have a bad record for racial riots, and for similar reasons has hesitated to encourage Puerto Ricans to go from the more tolerant metropolis to the South. Well-intentioned though the Commonwealth's policy has been, it still puts the Puerto Rican workers in a position where the good jobs are preempted by others. In contrast, the Negro, after the 1920's, made his move to the cities, braved opposition, competed for jobs, and established firm footholds and strong communities with respected leadership. The blame for this situation must be shared by our own Federal government.

Meanwhile impartial appraisals of the situation are wanting. Civic-minded individuals and the press are chary of speaking out for fear of exposing themselves to accusations of bias. City officials have been swayed by political motives. The Puerto Rican government fears unfavorable public reaction. Congressmen are under the pressure of those who prefer illegal Mexicans to citizen labor. The public reaction to the recent assault and attempted murder of Congressmen by Puerto Rican nationalist fanatics, as well as that to the earlier attempted assassination of President Truman, was a remarkable demonstration of restraint and tolerance. But the official silence which accompanied it evidenced, at least in some respects, a stubborn refusal to look into the factors responsible for the Puerto Rican problem and the remedies which might help alleviate it.

Of course, some of the main roots of the Puerto Rican problem lie in Puerto Rico itself. A people with a high birth rate is confined to a relatively small island. In 1950, population density in Puerto Rico was 645 persons to the square mile—at a similar density, the United States would have a population of 1,900 million. The average farmer's wife in Puerto Rico has about seven children, and 29 per cent of rural mothers average ten or more. This rate falls sharply in town and city where about 29 per cent of the families have one, two, or three children. A rapidly declining mortality rate, coupled with a rising birth rate, gives Puerto Rico one of the fastest-growing populations in the world.

Competition for jobs in Puerto Rico is keen; wages are low. The median income of all money-earners fourteen years and over in 1949 was $378 per annum—$617 in the urban, and only $275 in the rural areas. About half the total population fourteen

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years and over earned no income at all. Low incomes are reflected in poor living conditions. About 40 per cent of the people sleep in rooms with four or more persons; many of the houses are ramshackle and cannot withstand the island's hurricanes; most households have no ovens; many get their drinking water from ditches.

Yet the climate is mild, the environment good, and social relations easy. Though one of every four Puerto Ricans is a Negro, color distinctions are of no importance except among the white elite, and intermarriage is general. If social life has to be carried on in the street, it is at least the bright plaza, never the cold and dreary slum street of the metropolis.

The federally aided public housing program has helped, too. Puerto Rico's three housing authorities built more than 10,000 low-rent dwellings by 1953, and moved several thousand salvageable houses from squatter villages to new areas. But when I asked the director of the Puerto Rico Housing Authority if he thought public housing would ever solve the island's housing problem, he pointed to the birth chart and shrugged his shoulders.

Tax exemption to firms establishing factories on the island has improved work opportunities. Since 1940, thanks largely to the efforts of President Luis Munoz-Marin, net income has risen from $238,000,000 to $891,000,000, lifting per capita net income from $122 to more than $400. Public school enrollment has gone up and unemployment has fallen sharply. A new land law has distributed acreage to 28,000 farm families, and another 60,000 are expected to be settled in six years. Life expectancy went from forty-six years in 1940 to sixty-one years, and the death rate fell from 18.9 per thousand to 9.3 —all of which has helped double the population and further increase the pressure for migration.

One proposal for removing the population pressure is to give the islanders independence. But this would cut off migration to the United States and only increase Puerto Rico's employment problem. We cannot escape our obligations by such a course, and the island's people have consistently rejected independence when it was proposed.

A second proposal is education in contraception. This is difficult, partly because of Catholic opposition, partly because of the islanders' indifference, and partly because of their stubborn insistence upon having babies. Which reason counts most has not been determined, but poverty will continue to bring babies to the poor as long as parents see their children as their only protection against starvation in old age.

Statistics show, however, that contraception is not the answer and that the mainland itself can use all the babies Puerto Rico can produce. It is estimated that with an out-migration of 35,000 to 50,000 people annually, there is a fair chance that the population of the island would be stabilized in the next generation. And it can be safely said that 35,000 to 50,000 Puerto Rican migrants constitute only a fraction of what American industry could absorb. The United States in fact desperately needs this source of labor for its expansion.

The solution lies, not in limiting Puerto Rican numbers, but rather in our treating the Puerto Ricans as fellow citizens, enabling them to settle, once they come here, in the places that need them outside New York City. Above all, we need to recognize them as members of the community, with the same right to acceptance in the community and to the same help and understanding we extend to others.

Both the United States and the Commonwealth should undertake a national survey of labor opportunities and train Puerto Rican leaders to conduct groups of settlers to promising areas. The practice of waiting for actual job offerings to turn up before Puerto Rican labor is dispatched to the area should be modified to encourage settlement wherever there are fair probabilities of future jobs or the prospect of labor turnover. The U.S. Employment Service should act to discourage the importation of aliens to fill jobs that could go to the Puerto Ricans.

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Puerto Rican settlers in areas outside New York should include both men and women. The current practice of omitting provisions for family life and permanent settlement is shortsighted and unrealistic. A survey should be made of the number of Puerto Ricans compelled to return to the island, and the reasons for their return. A more effective educational campaign in Puerto Rico itself should present the facts about job opportunities to the islanders and encourage them to migrate directly to where work is available. Airlines from Puerto Rico to as many large cities on the mainland as possible should be opened at reasonable rates. More widespread instruction in the English language, and preparation for the new conditions they will meet on the mainland, would speed their settlement and adjustment.

But all these measures will do little unless we are prepared to see the Puerto Rican problem and discuss it candidly, not merely in terms of political or sectional considerations, but with a higher regard for the sheer human values involved. And this will never occur unless both the Puerto Rican and United States governments are prepared to look at the migrant as an American citizen instead of an outsider with a split loyalty. If he is to have all the rights of a citizen—which he should have—then the main objective should be not less migration from Puerto Rico, but more. It should be directed not toward New York City primarily, but to every area of opportunity throughout the country. The "problem" of the Puerto Rican should be acknowledged as a problem, an American problem, demanding choices between alternatives—choices which may not, in the nature of things, be ideal, and which may indeed often be disagreeable. But American communities have been confronted with similar issues in the past, in the cases of other minorities, and they have demonstrated that at least in housing, employment, education, and social relations, they have been able to meet such issues and resolve them.

A realistic housing program for the lower-income groups in the cities is, of course, indispensable, and a rural resettlement program is needed to encourage settlement on the farms. At the same time, Federal housing officials must stop the displacement of slum families by demolition operations. An effort should also be made to break the barriers that prevent minorities from obtaining access to land in the cities and suburbs and to make available living space in which to raise their families properly.

It is difficult of course to lay down uniform formulas for all cities when Puerto Ricans move into them. Much will depend on how far the local citizenry is prepared for the task and how much headway fears and rumors have already made in shaping attitudes. Firm policy, frank disclosure, sound public relations, the support of the local press and of public-interest groups, and a wholehearted interest in the program are the important factors here.

Last but not least, the Puerto Rican migrants themselves must take some initiative in coping with their problems. So far they have shown—for understandable reasons—too little solidarity and cooperation, with or without outside guidance, in resisting prejudice and animosity, and have produced too little leadership of their own. Perhaps it is because they feel themselves so close to their homeland; because they think of themselves as transients; or because they have—fortunately—no traditions as a minority, not having been one at home.

Whatever the reason, the more than 60 per cent drop in migration in 1954, which has been prominently publicized by the Puerto Rican government and greeted with a sigh of relief in New York City, is not a boon but may well prove a tragedy. Conditions on the island still being what they are, it is a temporary drop at best, and less a symbol of improved conditions in Puerto Rico than of the failure of a migration to the continent. The main answer to the problem the island and the mainland share is not in lessening the flow of population to the mainland but in maintaining it and, above all, in helping the migrants sink firm roots throughout the country.

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STORM OVER THE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEES

The Charges Against Them and the Record

JAMES RORTY

BECAUSE the House Committee on Un-American Activities failed to give the notorious American neo-Nazi James A. Madole and the violently anti-Semitic Conde McGinley a chance to be heard before releasing its "Preliminary Report on Neo-Fascist and Hate Groups," it has been reprobated by liberals in general and by a number of Jewish agencies in particular as unfair and un-American.* This would seem to mark the *reductio ad absurdum* of what might be called the "Civil Liberties First" position. In effect, it is maintained that, regardless of the public danger involved, *no* Congressional investigation of subversion, whether of the left or the right, must be permitted to deviate by one jot or tittle from orthodox civil-liberties dogma.

For a long time now liberals who lamented the "ordeal by slander" of Owen Lattimore, and swallowed whole the confraternity of camels that enabled the bureaus and publications of the Institute of Pacific Affairs to be used for the ends of Communist policy and propaganda, have, while making certain justifiable criticisms, been straining at sundry gnats in the procedures of the Congressional investigating committees. Errors which were real and flagrant in the case of the McCarthy travesties have been attributed by implication, and often quite falsely, to *all* investigating committees. These have been covered with a blanket condemnation, usually without *specific* reference or constructive analysis of the alleged violations of rights and procedures under liberal attack. Moreover, this condemnation was rarely coupled with any recognition of the realities of the subversion with which these committees were occupied. The attack has extended even further: to the impugnment and discrediting of the very institution of the Congressional investigating committee.

In the case of the Velde Committee's report on neo-fascist and hate groups, the "victims" of Congressional inquisition are certainly among the most noisome animals in the anti-democratic zoo, and the procedural gnat is tiny indeed. For, while certainly regrettable, the failure to hear Madole, McGinley, and their associates did not affect in

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TO ANYONE who reads the papers it is hardly news that enlightened people, liberal and conservative, have for some time been indignant over the Congressional committees investigating subversion—not only Senator McCarthy's, but all of them. How far liberal hostility to these committees had gone was revealed by the thunder that struck the Velde Committee when it released its preliminary report on its investigation of American neo-Nazi and hate groups. Here JAMES RORTY reports and analyzes the furor and puts it in perspective by citing the record of the committees on subversion: their errors and achievements in the touchy business of exposing anti-democratic conspiracies against our society, with due regard for individual rights. Mr. Rorty, well known to readers of this magazine, has many books to his credit and a long journalistic career behind him devoted to social and civil liberties problems. Among his books are *His Master's Voice, American Medicine Mobilizes,* and most recently, with Moshe Decter, *McCarthy and the Communists.* Mr. Rorty's article "What Price McCarthy Now?" appeared last month. Perhaps we should remind our readers that this, like all articles in COMMENTARY, is in no sense an expression of the official views of the magazine or its sponsors.

*A notable exception was the American Jewish Committee whose president, Irving M. Engel, described the Velde Committee's report as "an eloquent, timely, and instructive warning to the American people of the dangers presented by groups on the extreme right," though the AJC criticized some of the committee's procedures.

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the least the validity of what was avowedly a preliminary report, nor did it inflict any injustice upon the persons accused.

The American Civil Liberties Union liberals who defended the civil liberties of the Bund during the last war are at least being consistent. Not so, to take another example, the American Jewish Congress. Yesterday that organization was denouncing the House Committee on Un-American Activities for refusing to investigate John O'Donnell, *Daily News* columnist, for saying that the censure of General Patton had been inspired by Jews. "Uncertainty seems to cloud only the Committee's attitude toward the un-American activities of those serving the cause of fascism," the *Congress Weekly*, its organ, editorialized (November 23, 1945). Yet now the *Congress Weekly* writes: "Our freedoms are a seamless web. . . . By condoning the employment of arbitrary and unfair practices against those whose opinions we loathe, we are ultimately sanctioning the use of such practices against ourselves. . . . We are confident that the overwhelming majority of the Jewish Community will continue to insist that Congressional Committees shall respect the rights of all persons and groups, even when their views are as obnoxious as those of the National Renaissance Party and Conde McGinley. . . ."

Not only is this a worn and dated record; it is played, one feels, by the wrong disk jockey at the wrong time. Nor does it sound any fresher when it is put on by the American Civil Liberties Union—the same ACLU that saw in the Peekskill riots only an occasion for protecting "freedom of speech" for Paul Robeson along with the "right" of Communists to organize an armed provocation for international propaganda purposes.

In a letter to Congressman Velde, the ACLU's Executive Director Patrick Murphy Malin wrote in part: "The ACLU, as a non-partisan, private organization dedicated to the promotion of the Bill of Rights, has steadfastly maintained that persons or groups have a right to be heard by the Congressional Committee reporting on their activities.

"We regret that this has not been done for those concerned in the investigation of the 'hate' groups about whom the Committee is reporting, and submit that such denial to a hearing is contrary to the Committee's rules promulgated on July 14, 1953. We regret further that the mentioned report was leaked to the press before being subjected to full committee consideration.

"We have further maintained that it should not be the function of Congressional investigations to inquire into political beliefs and associations. It is essential to the health of our democratic process that free men be guaranteed the right to maintain their political views and associations free from governmental inquiry. It is this personal guarantee which makes our society fundamentally different from a totalitarian society. . . . Of course, should there be any indication that these individuals and groups are engaging in subversive activities, it would be within the jurisdiction of the Committee to investigate their activities. . . ."

One would be happier about this last saving sentence if one did not remember how desperately hard it has been to meet the ACLU's high standards for subversion; where Joe Doakes—and ultimately the courts—have seen treason, the ACLU has often seen only dissent or non-conformity— on the left or on the right. But the most categorical rejection of the Velde Committee's effort came from the Washington *Post*. Herblock's cartoon showed Congressman Velde presenting his report to a shocked Uncle Sam, under the caption: "See—We're Completely Impartial in Our Unfairness."

One cannot fairly demand that a cartoon tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. But Herblock's drawing suggests only the tiniest fraction of the truth. Moreover, its effect, like that of the ACLU's letter, was to abort the potential usefulness of a report which, while revealing little very new, was clearly in the public interest—by all reasonable, as well as traditional American standards—and well within the Committee's mandate.

Right-wing totalitarianism, whether do-

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mestic or imported, is as much the proper concern of Congress as was the exposure of interlocking subversion in government departments. The Un-American Activities Committee, on the record, can claim priority in the exposure of both fascist and Communist activities—a fact that many civil libertarians conveniently forgot when they deplored, as many of them did, the Committee's persistence in exposing Communists, and when they attacked the "fascist" tendencies of this and other committees, even going so far as to attribute fascist sympathies and affiliations to their members. The fact is that in the present report the Committee merely returns to the field of inquiry which it opened up when in 1938 it investigated the activities of the German-American Bund. Again, in the present report, it tells the country, under the imprimatur of the oldest Congressional committee investigating subversion, what the country very much needs to know: that the anti-Semitic totalitarianism of the "right" is not the invention of "hysterical" or "Zionist" Jewish defense organizations, as "rightist" hate-mongers have been alleging with some effect even among respectable circles that should know better. It shows that, on the contrary, Messrs. Madole and McGinley are actively and openly—far more openly than the Communists—engaged in fostering racial and religious discrimination and hatred, in fomenting divisiveness and disorder, and in lending aid and comfort to Communist policy and propaganda in the cold war. In the case of Madole, the report shows, without going beyond documentary evidence, that he has organized a para-military force for the support of his totalitarian party and program.

LET us look at the Madole record, as we find it in the Committee's preliminary report.

James A. Madole founded his National Renaissance party at his former home in Beacon, New York, which is a few miles north of Peekskill, in January of 1949. A few months later the state police caught him distributing anti-Semitic pamphlets during the Peekskill riots, and sent him packing. Today, after six years of heiling and speechmaking on Yorkville street corners, of abortive attempts to found branches in half a dozen cities, and of grandiose plans "to coordinate racial nationalist activities in America, Europe, Africa and Asia," the National Renaissance party boasts a membership of from 200 to 700, which is apparently declining, and maintains only a mimeographed and sporadically issued *NRP Bulletin*.

Some of Madole's followers are hangovers from the pre-war Bund movement. Others are ex-Communists—defectors from the Jefferson School and Communist youth groups. A few appear to have been West German neo-Nazis, members of Otto Remer's recently banned Socialist Reich party.

The portrait of Adolf Hitler is their icon, heiled by a uniformed "elite guard"; anti-Semitism is their theme song and in their demonology Zionism is allied with Communism for the conquest of the world.

"Eventually," writes Madole in the October *NRP Bulletin*, "America must admit her debt to Adolf Hitler who first called upon all Aryan people to unite and challenge Jewish economic and political power. . . . America is the last obstacle in the path of Jewish conquest. Either the Aryan or the Jew must yield in the world struggle. The goal of our National Renaissance Movement becomes clear."

During the Prague trials and other purges of Jews behind the Iron Curtain, the NRP defended the Communist leadership and implied that Europe and America should follow the Soviet example. An NRP pamphlet entitled *Brotherhood*, distributed in 1953 and 1954, blazoned the headlines: "In Russia they Execute Them the Prague and Beria Way! In U.S.A. They Promote Them the Dexter White Way!"

NOW for Conde McGinley, as exposed in the Committee report.

McGinley's semi-monthly magazine *Common Sense*, which he edits and publishes from his print shop in Unionville, New York, is probably the most successful anti-Semitic racket now operating in this country. In addi-

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tion to the magazine, which sometimes has a print order of over 100,000 and averages around 50,000, McGinley prints innumerable pamphlets, and his office serves as a clearing house for hate propagandists throughout the country.

Common Sense, the first issue of which appeared in June 1947, is the successor of other McGinley publications variously entitled *Think, The Think,* and *Think Weekly.* Its anti-Semitic line became virulent in 1948, when it defended Robert H. Best, the American newsman who was convicted of treason and sentenced to life imprisonment for his wartime service to the Nazis as a radio propagandist. McGinley defines Communism as "a false face for Judaism." Typical headlines appearing in the magazines are: "Jewish Leaders Are Crazy for Power"; "Zionists Threaten Russia with War"; "Brotherhood—Jew Trap for Christianity"; "Invisible Government Rules Both Parties—Adlai and Ike Marxist Stooges."

In the December 1, 1952 issue of *Common Sense,* a contributor, George Thomas Adams, echoing Madole's approval of the purges of Jews behind the Iron Curtain, wrote: ". . . If the Russian people wish to throw off their Jewish yoke, what right have we to criticize them? . . . We should be doing the same."

In collaborating with Communist propaganda denouncing the United States as a "war-monger," McGinley has gone even further than Madole. In the March 15, 1953 issue of *Common Sense,* he writes: "A quick war, with or without the consent of Congress, is reportedly planned within 60 days. The Zionists are now ready to supplant their Soviet brethren. There is no difference between Palestinian Socialism and Russian Socialism. Palestine is solidly Marxist in leadership, in political parties, in rule, aim and objective. . . . You and your neighbor's 19-year-old boy is scheduled to be drafted for *Global Zionism* this next month in 41 states. Our blood and treasure are being strewn across the earth with little complaint from us 'slaves who are considered the property of the MASTER'."

During the eight years of its existence, states the Committee report, *Common Sense* has opened its columns regularly to many racist and ultra-nationalist propagandists. Among the contributors to *Common Sense* have been Eustace Mullins, W. Henry MacFarland, Jr., Frederick Charles F. Weiss, and Kurt Mertig, all of whom have associated themselves with the National Renaissance party; also Robert W. Williams, of Santa Ana, California, Mrs. Elizabeth Dilling, Mrs. Lyrl Clark Van Hyning, Colonel Eugene Sanctuary, and General George Van Horn Mosely, retd., who in 1940 was proposed as national leader of an abortive attempt to form a coalition of American fascist and hate groups that was exposed by the Un-American Activities Committee.

One of McGinley's angels is the Jewish anti-Semite Benjamin Freedman, who told the Armed Services Committee on December 12, 1950 that he had given $15,000 to *Common Sense.* In July of 1952 McGinley and his associates staged a Chicago meeting which he called an "annual convention of nationalists." Among the 200 delegates to this convention were many of the previously mentioned contributors to *Common Sense.*

CERTAINLY in the light of this record, Madole and McGinley have done more than merely hold totalitarian *opinions.* The ACLU throws away its case when it acknowledges that it is within the jurisdiction of the Committee to investigate subversive activities. For on the evidence as to their activities as reported in their own public and official statements alone, both agitators might well be considered subversive.

It would have been very much better, of course, if Madole, McGinley, and their associates had been subpoenaed to testify before the Committee—in executive sessions only, since they might have been expected to exploit public hearings for propaganda purposes, as did the Communists. Why this wasn't done is difficult to understand, since it would have required little time or trouble simply to confront Madole and McGinley with the files, respectively, of the *National Renaissance Party Bulletin* and *Common*

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Sense, and establish their responsibility for these publications, which they have never denied. Nor is it at all probable that they would have claimed the immunity of the Fifth Amendment against testifying.

The unfairness, however, of Herblock's jibe becomes apparent when it is realized that in the Velde Committee's report both agitators are accused principally by their own frank utterances. These are fully quoted, and the essential documents are reproduced in the appendix of the report. In no case does the Committee rip fragments out of context and subject them to dubious interpretation in McCarthy's manner.

The ACLU's charge that the Velde report violates the Committee's rules of procedure as promulgated on July 15, 1953 is equally without substance, since these rules specifically state that preliminary investigations may be initiated by the Committee's staff with the approval of the chairman. That the contents of the report were leaked to the press in advance of its official publication is true but unimportant, since seven of the nine members of the Committee later approved the report with only two abstentions.

Thus the civil libertarians' objections to the report reduce to the unfortunate, if inconsequential, mistake of failing to hold executive hearings, an omission which the Committee will presumably repair when it enlarges the scope of its preliminary inquiry —admittedly little more than a trial run.

PROBABLY no one was more bewildered and dismayed by the libertarian reaction to the Velde Committee's report than its two principal objects, who must have had to do a lot of explaining to their followers. What, in the name of all that is Nazi, does a hard-working hate merchant have to do to be damned? It is bad enough to be cold-shouldered by their hero, Senator McCarthy. But to be defended by the Washington *Post,* the American Jewish Congress, and the American Civil Liberties Union! It will be hard to persuade these characters that this wasn't just another dirty Jewish-Communist trick.

It will also be hard, one suspects, to persuade very many Jews, or for that matter, very many Gentiles, that the "Preliminary Report on Neo-Fascist and Hate Groups" represents an excursion outside the proper terrain of a Congressional investigating committee, or that it was a waste of Congressional time and money.

Unquestionably, Mr. Velde hit the right targets in this inquiry. Madole and McGinley are not the most important neo-fascist agitators and hate merchants in America. But they are probably the most violent, the most forthright, and therefore the most vulnerable of the half-hundred more or less racist, more or less totalitarian agitators who have weathered the hard times that followed the defeat of Nazism in Europe.

Moreover, both agitators are linked by interest, and to some degree by actual collaboration, with the more important figures which the Committee may be expected to question in executive session when its inquiry is resumed. Hence the preliminary report on Madole and McGinley is not only valuable in itself, but a good way to begin the unraveling of the network of half-open, half-Aesopian agitation and propaganda operated by Gerald L. K. Smith, Allen A. Zoll, Joseph P. Kamp, and other anti-Semitic, ultra-nationalist, and neo-fascist leaders. It may be that prosecution under the Smith Act will not be indicated in any of these cases, just as it is probably inadvisable in the case of Madole, although the Velde Committee makes this recommendation.* But clearly their activities, as distinguished from their opinions, fall within the Velde Committee's mandate to investigate "the extent, character, and objects of un-American propaganda activities in the United States." Our Constitutional liberties will gain rather than suffer by such an exposure, and we shall be better enabled to occupy positions of strength in the cold war.

*On this point the American Jewish Committee expressed itself as follows: "We dissociate ourselves from the recommendation in the House Committee's report that the Department of Justice seek an indictment against the National Renaissance party under the Smith Act. We doubt that this is either desirable or advisable."

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II

WHEN the Un-American Activities Committee is reorganized under Democratic control, its chairman will be Representative Francis E. Walter, of Pennsylvania, co-author of the McCarran-Walter Act. Libertarians, with some reason, will not regard Mr. Walter as much better than Mr. Velde. It is important to note, however, that the retirement of Kit Clardy will leave the Committee with a majority of better-than-average Congressmen who are also intelligent liberals; also, that the Committee has shown itself disposed to keep its procedures well within the pattern recommended by the National Catholic Welfare Council, the National Council of Churches, and the American Jewish Committee, whom the Committee invited to consult with it in October of 1953.*

It is unlikely, therefore, that when and if the Committee fulfills its promise to extend its investigation of racist and religious hate groups and fascist agitators it will fail to accord these worthies the same consideration that has been accorded recent witnesses before the Committee.

Yet it is most improbable that this will satisfy our civil-libertarian extremists. Realizing this, one is moved to ask: What has happened to the American liberal tradition? How has it come about that genuine liberals —as distinguished from Communist fellow-travelers and dupes—are found continuously directing their chief fire against the investigating committees of Congress, rather than against the subversive forces of the left and right which these committees have helped to expose and checkmate? The forcible destruction of our civil liberties is the first objective of these forces; why, then, must their defense be not only the first, but too often the sole concern of our civil libertarians?

When Congress investigated Alger Hiss, the vast majority of professors, editors, ministers, "opinion-molders," liberal and conservative alike, echoed the Communist cry of "witch-hunt," declaring that the Un-American Activities Committee, not Communist subversion, constituted the chief threat to our liberties.† Now again our libertarians are saying, in effect, that the physician is worse than the disease; that the Velde Committee, not neo-Nazi racism, is the proper object of attack.

The physician in this case is Congress, which American liberals traditionally regarded as their ally against "Executive tyranny." It was not until the New Deal that liberals began to look upon Congress as "backward," "obstructive," and frustrating the efforts of a tutelary and forward-looking Executive. Undoubtedly this served to condition in some degree the attitude of the liberals. Important too, no doubt, was the discovery that the Communist conspiracy had involved in one way or another a great many of their nicest friends and acquaintances. Incredulous and indignant, they joined the clamor of the Communists. The latter, of course, wanted no investigation whatever of Communist activities, and covered *all* the investigating committees under the blanket smear of "witch-hunt," "hysteria," "star-chamber proceedings," and "McCarthyism." The result was that exercise by Congress of its investigatory function was soon made to look suspect.

TODAY, nine out of ten liberals seem to believe firmly, and without having read anything more than newspaper summaries of the hearings, that the McCarran Committee's investigation of the Institute of Pacific Relations was a savage inquisition.

*These organizations were sharply berated by a number of liberal groups and Jewish defense agencies for having consulted with the Velde Committee in a joint effort to make committee practice more regardful of individual rights.

†I shall not recapitulate here the lengthy record of the libertarian's negative attitude to any or all investigation or prosecution of "left" subversive elements, but will refer the reader to Alan F. Westin's detailed article, "Libertarian Precepts and Subversive Realities," in the January issue of COMMENTARY. "Libertarians," he concludes, "have tended to exalt procedure to the point where it often dwarfs substantive considerations. . . . Fair procedure, it should be recalled, though the right of every individual under our Constitution, is not a *substitute for ascertaining the truth,* but a means of doing so."

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Actually, of course, the McCarran Committee achieved its revelations and harvested its crop of forty "victims" who took refuge in the Fifth Amendment, without resorting either to fishing expeditions or to inquisitorial mayhem. Procedurally, in fact, the committee and its staff anticipated many of the reforms adopted subsequently by other investigating committees, and in its final report it authored one of the great documents in the literature of Congressional investigation.

From the beginning, "McCarthyism" was in actuality 90 per cent McCarthy; as a characterization of Congressional investigative methods in general, it was a smear. Whatever the procedural errors of the other Congressional investigators, and they were not negligible, none of them even approximated McCarthy's bulldozing of witnesses, his manipulation of the record, his dictatorial abuse of his powers as chairman. On the whole, the methods of the investigative committees have advanced steadily during the period that ended with the departure of Senator McCarthy from his investigative chairmanship and to this, of course, the criticisms and recommendations of civic agencies have contributed an important part. This advance is made abundantly clear in the just released report of the Senate Committee on Rules, on Rule of Procedure for Senate Investigating Committees.

ONE of the Rules Committee's most informed witnesses was Benjamin Mandel, research director of the Senate Internal Security Committee. In a review of the Communist attitude toward Congressional investigations in general and investigations of Communist subversion and propaganda in particular, Mr. Mandel showed that, dating from Lenin, Communist policy has been either to exploit Congressional investigations for Communist purposes or, when they could not be so exploited, to denounce them. Among the Congressional investigating committees that were for their own purposes ardently supported by the Communists and their sympathizers were the House Committee on Interstate Migration, four members of whose staff invoked the Fifth Amendment when they appeared before the Senate Internal Security Committee, the LaFollette Civil Liberties Committee, the Senate Committee on Technological Mobilization, and the Senate Subcommittee on Wartime Health and Education. Communist and crypto-Communist support of these investigations, whose staffs unhappily were more or less infiltrated by Communists or Communist sympathizers, was never qualified by any niggling about jurisdiction or procedure.

Liberals tended to echo uncritically the Communist applause of these committees, although some of them wandered far afield and their treatment of witnesses left much to be desired from the libertarian point of view. This, of course, was equally true of some of the historic investigations that are high in the lexicon of the progressive tradition. One thinks, for example, of the baiting of J. Pierpont Morgan during the Pujo investigation, when a publicity man was permitted to plant a midget in Morgan's lap. The great liberal public approved the substance of the Pujo investigation—and were highly impatient when counsel took refuge in procedural "technicalities." The same approval went to Senators Borah, LaFollette, Wheeler, and Walsh for their exposure of the Teapot Dome scandals during the 1920's, to the Truman Committee during the 1940's, and to the Kefauver Committee, despite its something less than impeccable regard for the rights and dignities of the assorted witnesses who came to testify before them on various matters of racketeering and political corruption.

On the other hand, the Un-American Activities Committee and indeed most of the committees investigating subversion have been denounced with equal violence for both the subject matter of their inquiries and their methods. In the words of a pamphlet issued by the Civil Rights Congress (with a foreword by Henry Wallace), the investigation of Communist subversion was designed "to destroy the free channels of expression and wipe out all dissenting opinion."

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Much the same note has been struck by many liberal critics. Critics of the committees, moreover, have not been satisfied with attacking the right of the Congress to investigate this whole area, nor with stigmatizing the procedure of the investigators. They have fallen into the habit of challenging the value of the findings: one continually hears, "After all, did they actually find any Communists? Did they ever, except for destroying a few individuals, really expose any conspiracy?" Those willing to read the record and make up their minds not only as to the findings but as to procedures, will find it worthwhile to get from the Government Printing Office representative transcripts of the hearings.* After such an exposure to the record almost any open-minded person is likely to conclude, with most informed students of the matter, that a great volume of evidence was unearthed demonstrating the Communist ties and activities of hundreds of individuals. By this time the various committees working in their diverse areas have developed a most informative picture of the nature and mechanisms of a massive Communist conspiracy reaching into many high (and low) places in the United States. Out of these investigations have come recommendations for legislation to facilitate the detection and prosecution of subversives and to counteract and prevent further infiltration.

ONE might have expected that the Communists and their sympathizers would have been disarmed when Congress turned to the investigation of Nazism. They were not, because they feared that any investigation of subversive "political parties" was bound to touch them eventually. As far back as 1935 the *Daily Worker* frothed at the Committee for the Investigation of Nazi Propaganda Activities, declaring that "under the cloak of investigating fascism [it] directed its fire against Communism." (In those days none but extreme libertarians rushed to the protection of the Nazis. It is a measure of the present confusion that today Communists and many liberals are as one in rejecting the Velde Committee, even when it seeks to expose fascist and hate groups.)

Equally revealing is the position taken by the National Lawyers' Guild (listed by the Attorney General as a Communist front organization) in a statement submitted to the Committee on Rules and Administration. The Guild, reads this statement, ". . . does not believe the basic evil in the practices of such 'investigations' as those conducted by the McCarthy and Jenner Committees lies in their procedures or methods. The great evil lies rather in the area of 'Investigation.' . . . Added procedural safeguards will only assure that the injury is done according to approved safeguards."

In short, what really hurts, from the pro-Communist point of view, is the right of Congress to investigate totalitarian subversion, a right which even the most extreme libertarians concede.

On this question the Committee on Rules quotes Justice Holmes: "It must be remembered that legislatures are ultimate guardians of the liberties and welfare of the people in quite as great a degree as the courts."

Another authority quoted in the report is Woodrow Wilson, who wrote in his *Constitutional Government*: "The informing

*Among the most enlightening of these recommended documents are the following: (1) Reports of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression (Kersten) including Special Report No. 2: Treatment of the Jews under Communism; also, by the same committee, Hearings on the Investigation of Communist Takeover and Occupation of Hungary. . . . Poland, Lithuania and Slovakia. . . . Non-Russian Nations of the USSR; Report of the Subcommittee to Investigate Communist Aggression in Latin America. (2) House Committee on Education and Labor, Reports Nos. 15, 16, 17: Investigation of Communist Infiltration into Labor Unions Which Service the Industries of the United States. (3) Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Internal Security Subcommittee: Report on Interlocking Subversion in Government Departments; Report on Institute of Pacific Relations. (4) House Committee on Un-American Activities, Report No. 1115: Civil Rights Congress as a Communist Front; Report of the Communist "Peace" Offensive; Exposé of Communist Activities in the State of Massachusetts; Colonization of America in Basic Industries by the Communist Party of the U. S. A.; Organized Communism in the United States.

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function of Congress should be preferred even to its legislative function."

Basing itself on these and many other cited authorities, the Committee on Rules concludes:

"Without facts there can be no intelligent debate in Congress or in the public forum. And facts, to be useful, must be communicated. Clearly, therefore, the informing function of Congress cannot be separated from the legislative. Finally, Congress must on occasion investigate to determine whether it should legislate at all on the subject under inquiry. If the facts lead Congress to a negative conclusion, the criticism that the investigation had no legislative purpose and was one merely to inform, is without validity."*

EQUALLY applicable to totalitarianism of the right or left are the Committee's conclusions with respect to inquiry into personal beliefs and associations. On this subject the report says: "Committees of Congress must function in a world of realities. What might have been classified decades ago as private opinion, of no concern to Congress, takes on a different connotation in the light of world events, whose impact Congress may not disregard. The global Communist apparatus is neither a study group nor a debating society."

This is equally true, of course, of the neo-fascist and hate groups with which the Velde Committee has concerned itself. That they do not at present constitute a clear and present danger to our society does not mean that we are obliged either to ignore their activities, or to spread over them the protective mantle of an increasingly unreal classic libertarianism.

In addition to seconding the adoption by the Senate of the three rules already embodied in the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, the Committee makes twelve procedural recommendations. Liberals who were sure no good could come out of a committee presided over by Senator Jenner, just as they were sure that the Watkins Committee would never censure Senator McCarthy, are reading the Rules Committee's procedural recommendations with something like shock and incredulity. Even the American Civil Liberties Union is obliged to say that its reactions to the report are mixed. It regrets that the Committee did not recommend ruling out one-man committee hearings or letting witnesses confront and cross-examine their accusers. For the rest, however, the libertarians get about three-quarters of what they asked for, including limiting the questioning of witnesses to committee members and their staff, advance notice to witnesses concerning the subject matter of their examinations, and prohibiting the release of executive committee testimony except by the full committee.

If the Senate adopts the Rules Committee's recommendations, as it probably will, maybe that will serve to relax in some measure the present liberal quarantine of the Congressional investigating committees. In any case, it is time for a general reexamination of the classic libertarian position. Time —and totalitarians—march on. The nation is not prepared to lose the cold war, either at home or abroad, just to accommodate uninformed and rigid libertarians whose resemblance to the celebrated Michael Shay (he died defending his right of way) becomes increasingly apparent.

*Most libertarians accept in principle such affirmations of the investigative duty of the legislative branch. Confusion arises when, in implementing this principle, Congressional committees disturb the deeply buried liberal illusion that the Communists are just another political party, a little further to the left perhaps, and bolder in its expression of "political dissent," yet still an entirely legitimate political association whose investigation by Congress is an invasion of the First Amendment freedoms of speech and assembly. Not until a year ago did the ACLU formally repudiate this position.

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THE FRAGMENTED PEOPLE THAT IS GERMANY

Stability, But Through Divisiveness

FRITZ STERN

IT IS difficult to think of Germany dispassionately, and on my way there last spring I found that I still felt intensely what I had tried so hard to overcome. In the 30's, when we felt the hatred of Nazism as a moral imperative, the distinction between Nazi and German often became blurred; and the strongest passions seemed feeble when, at the end of the war, we uncovered the totality of crime, and even our generals broke down and cried. But after that, the very enormity of Nazism speeded exoneration. For such crimes no people could be held responsible, and to affirm collective guilt somehow suggested Nazism in reverse. I had wrestled with these perplexities, but I could rally neither reason to sustain my rejection of Germany nor sentiment to support my conclusion that the German nation cannot be held accountable.

Ten weeks in Berlin helped me to understand afresh. At some point I became conscious that the last layer of ideology and hatred had peeled off. It was not a matter of *tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner,* but of recognizing intellectually and experiencing emotionally that there are no "Germans," no "they" on whom blame can be pinned, but rather an aggregate of individuals and groups, cherishing few hopes and many hatreds and living without common traditions. And I came to understand how this divisiveness, this absence of consent and tradition, has had an immensely weakening effect on German politics. My own hatred did not survive my proximity with the Germans; I left Germany in August purged of hatred—though not disloyal to the feelings of the past, and full of forebodings about the future.

I WAS unaware how far this process of education had gone until one moment when I felt an intense humility and sorrow which cut through all earlier passions. The occasion was the memorial service for the victims of the 20th of July revolt against Hitler. Only a few cabinet members and the relatives of the dead attended the ceremony in the new American-built Auditorium Maximum of the Free University. The audience sat in silence, as at a funeral, no one applauding as Heuss and Adenauer walked down the aisle to their seats or as the last notes of the second movement of the "Eroica" died. Heuss, in his gentle Swabian accent, spoke quietly and quickly, without pathos, recalling the anguish of the men who had chosen themselves murderers of murderers and had paid for their courage in torture and death. These few men, terrified of their responsibility, gaining moral certainty only in the retribution which followed their failure, had sought to arrest and alter fate, had plotted conspiracy on a world-historical plane. As Heuss relived those memories, I struggled with my own feelings, saying to myself that their purposes had not been ours, that their sacrifice had been born of German nationalism, not atonement; but before such moral heroism my quarrels ceased. Heuss concluded, "Our debt to them has yet to be fulfilled." The orchestra played *"Ich hatt' einen Kameraden,"* but softly, transforming a battle song into a funeral elegy. And as I stood there, among sorrowing men, I sensed that more than a hymn was being transformed.

FRITZ STERN, describing his visit this past spring and summer to Berlin where he taught as an exchange professor at the Free University, attempts here an evocation of the climate of culture, human aspiration, and morale in German society today—intangibles more difficult to describe than ideological and political trends, but perhaps as important because in the end they set the scene and establish the boundaries of Germany's evolving postwar national life. Mr. Stern, assistant professor of history at Columbia University, where he carried out his undergraduate and graduate studies, has contributed to the *Saturday Review,* the *American Scholar,* and other periodicals.

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The audience slowly filed out, still silent except for some sobbing, and as I walked around in the adjoining hall and looked at these people—old, distinguished, and sadly proud, dressed in mourning, faces hardened and humbled by suffering, I felt a sense of shame for my indiscriminate hatred.

For in that audience I saw a country's elite, perhaps rescued from its callous provincialism only by a catastrophe, but an elite nevertheless, and one which had been condemned, or self-condemned, to political passivity. These were the men who should have led their people twenty or forty years before, and neither sought to nor were sought, and even now, with few exceptions, were without public responsibility. As I walked home that day, I grasped that the once popular view of German history, as an irreversible process of failure and falseness since Luther or Bismarck, missed the true tragedy; uniform wickedness does not describe the German experience, but a succession of "might-have-beens," of great promises never realized. A Manichean struggle, with Satan always the winner.

WHAT rendered the sacrifice of the 20th of July senseless was not the accidental survival of Hitler. The conspirators had played for the soul of their people, and lost. Ten years had to pass before German officialdom formally acknowledged the heritage of that resistance, and now when acknowledgment was finally made, indifference ran too strong, and the slanderers of the movement, rejoicing over Otto John's defection on the anniversary itself, were ready to peddle their poisonous slogan, "Once a traitor, always a traitor."

What was thus vilified was the only movement of resistance in Germany which had at the end united diverse men from all regions and traditions: Junker officers and bourgeois bureaucrats, clergymen and labor leaders. How different the German spirit might be today if their memory had been cherished! Honoring three thousand martyred patriots could have inspired a proud unity when every other loyalty and tradition had snapped. But the German people rejected their sacrifice. In the future a few will remember, some others will keep an embarrassed silence; most will learn to disavow these men, and so exonerate themselves for their support of Hitler or their passivity.* But as the Germans abandon this legacy, perhaps we should claim it, as a reminder that the Nazi era had its millions of spineless servants and its handful of heroes.

Nor did the Germans find any other identification with a past tradition which could have moderated the divisiveness of their society. Nothing struck me so much this summer as this thinly disguised *Zerissenheit* in German life. I am not thinking of the imposed division between East and West, or of the traditional divisions of class and interest, or of the new and inescapable division between Nazi and anti-Nazi. It is more than all that—it is the division between each and all, a kind of Hobbesian war without weapons.

ON OUR very first day in Berlin, our landlady, Frau Geheimrat M., warned me against trusting any German. "We aren't what we used to be," she said. And I was to hear this theme in endless variations. Most of the Germans I met were not troubled by extermination camps or war crimes—these were either ignored or charged to the villains at the top. What troubled them was the suspicion that the Third Reich and its catastrophic end had corrupted the Germans themselves.

Each seems to have his own particular recollection of those weeks at the end of the war when millions were on the move, and each remembers how Germans robbed, looted, and betrayed fellow Germans. But I know that those same weeks also evoked noble deeds of generosity and self-sacrifice, and these seem forgotten. The contrast struck me the more since I think historically the Germans are peculiarly given to these laments of moral depravity and are correspondingly susceptible to the specious idealist who promises regeneration. Their sense of moral or aesthetic failure has often been injected into German politics, in the stab-in-the-back legend after the First World War, or Hitler's promise to "cleanse Germany" of the "de-

*One of the best-known German historians, now retired, spoke to me of a Socialist participant of the 20th of July attempt, whom I know, as an "opportunist." I objected that to have risked one's life and endured torture for nearly a year did not strike me as typical opportunism. His answer: "We couldn't all get entrance tickets for the concentration camps."

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cadence" of modernity (and here the Jew became the image of modernity, as he had been to many German ideologists since 1870). That non-political, speciously moral tone of German politics is still in evidence, and in part must be attributed to the absence of a commonly accepted political tradition—such as the Western countries evolved in the process of building up their democratic states—and to the misgivings which Germans have about themselves. In short, the uncertain political idiom or allegiance is unable to restrain the powerful non-political forces of collective resentment which break into the political society. Hence the significance of this moral uncertainty which lingers from the Second World War.

The Germans' memory of their own meanness feeds also on the trials of the first years of occupation. One story can serve as representative of many. A prominent professor of medicine was barred from his university post by our military government because, though a non-Nazi, he had in the 30's accepted the rectorship of the university and in his inaugural address had spoken some words of perfunctory praise of the new regime. He had had one hundred copies of the speech mimeographed, distributed ninety-eight to his good friends, and kept two. After the war, he offered one of his copies to the American officer investigating him. The officer said: "Thank you, but I have already received forty-seven unsolicited copies."

PROSPERITY brought back the amenities, but the suspicion of German against German has continued, shifting now from the individual to the group. It is group against group, with each protesting, and believing, that the other is out to kill. It is as if the Germans were locked in a continuous and particularly vicious American presidential campaign, only here everyone believes all the campaign charges and countercharges. I talked to a bank director from Cologne, himself in exile during the Third Reich, who insisted that the labor unions were bent on destroying private property and that co-determination—foisted upon Germany, he darkly hinted, by American labor unions—was the opening wedge to disaster. Again, the director of an Evangelical *Gymnasium* in Berlin, a generous man doing an admirable job, warned me of the Catholic Church's plot to establish a totalitarian regime in West Germany and of the corrosive impact of liberalism which threatens all "values." And on my last day in Berlin a professor of a Protestant seminary, a leading participant in his church's fight against Hitler, confessed to me that he despaired of the church's vitality and integrity in West Germany: "If I were younger," he said, "I'd go and fight it out in the East; as it is, I thank the Lord I don't have to live among West Germans."

His feelings were typical of Berlin, where everyone seems to cherish a lusty hatred of the West Germans, considering them smug and heartless. And indeed my two weeks in West Germany taught me that the Bavarians, Swabians, and Rhinelanders do resent the troublesome claims of the Berliners, even as they resent the East Germans who stand as a muted reproach to their enjoyment of prosperity. Weak indeed is the national sense of a people that could so rapidly move so far apart. Even at the height of the uprising of June 17, 1953, the East Germans who risked their lives condemning their Quisling government and its continued injustices made only feeble gestures in the direction of reunification. As a Prussian conservative wrote in the 1840's, Germany's national characteristic is its divisiveness.

TO READ such judgments, even to understand that historically the Germans are for all their occasional outbursts of chauvinism a peculiarly non-nationalistic people, is much different from discovering this for oneself in immediate, spontaneous words and gestures. This I did while serving as an examiner on a Fulbright screening committee in Berlin; here I could drop pleasantry and the polite silence about fundamental questions which I had to show towards my own students. We interviewed some forty students from the various faculties of the Free University—bright, well-educated people who were articulate and informed about everything but their own past. Hardly any of them had tried to analyze the terrible problems of Germany's last decades. With the significant exception of some young theologians, they neither accepted their past as a part of themselves, nor had come to grips with it in any other way. What they carried was a faint, blurred picture of the last one hundred years,

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or of the fatality of the last twenty, with no more sense of personal involvement than an American might feel in talking about a rigged convention. The divorce between German intellect and politics, the continuing absence of a live, pervasive political society which I had so often postulated in the abstract, was here on exhibit, as it were.

Quite a few of the students protested their anti-Nazism by assuring me, "But . . . we lost everything at the end of the war." Asked how it happened, they cited Versailles, the inflation, or the depression as responsible for Hitler, and Yalta for everything after Hitler. These were the automatic answers that reflected their unwillingness to penetrate the past and sort out the good from the bad. Certainly the past, whether remote or recent, is no source of pride to them; it is not even a part of their experience. I remember asking a particularly engaging young fellow, a Junker scion as it happened, to mention one German political figure of the last two hundred years whose picture he might put on his desk. "None," was his reply, and I thought to myself: who, after all, who? But I also remembered Burke's injunction to the French: ". . . respecting your forefathers, you would have been taught to respect yourselves." What of a people that neither celebrates nor distorts its history, but ignores it?

This escape from the past reinforces the German propensity to blame others for their misfortunes. Collective guilt is, as I have said, a harsh and perhaps even a meaningless concept; and yet I had expected to find that the conscience of the Germans would have been tried. Except to a few, the mote in the Allied eye seems already much bigger than the beam in their own. At every level, even among the most detached and conscious anti-Nazis, I found this emphasis upon Allied "mistakes," expressing the general resentment over Allied unity against the Germans. Why unconditional surrender? Why after D-Day did not the Western powers join us in a crusade against the Soviets? And, again and again: why the "sell-out" at Yalta? And when I suggested—more often than I wished to—that it had been Germany's aggression which had in the end brought the Soviets to the Elbe, that we had been compelled to fight with the Soviets against the immediate evil, there would be silence or grudging assent, with a glance at the bookshelf where W. H. Chamberlin's *America's Second Crusade* or books of that sort—all diligently translated—bore witness that this new stab-in-the-back legend can be substantiated by the utterances of many Americans.* And so, with what Germans like to think is America's blessing, the belief grows stronger that the European collapse began in 1945—with the victory of the Allies.

ANYONE looking for German contrition will have to be content with their boundless self-pity. Each German his own horror-story and each city its peculiar tragedy. And why deny them? When I first saw the center of Berlin—for blocks nothing but rubble and silence, or the bombed-out shell of the Anhalter Bahnhof with signs warning of rat-poison—I too was overawed. I tried not to think of this terrifying wasteland as retribution, but later it occurred to me that this may be how many Germans—quite unconsciously—regard it. Why would the West Berliners now collect funds not to restore or demolish the Gedächtnisskirche but to preserve it as a ruin? Could it be to remind themselves that punishment has been received, that the debt is paid? Why be contrite about war crimes and genocide, which a few Germans may have been guilty of, when Germans indiscriminately were bombed, starved, and harried?

In a sermon for the 20th of July, delivered before President Heuss and broadcast to the nation, the Bishop of Berlin praised God's mercifulness, declaring that even in the most horrible days of German suffering His mercy had remained. During this painful recital of German suffering there was not even an allusion to the sufferings of others. In despair at what I thought a culpable omission I wrote to him, humbly suggesting that his authority and the uniqueness of the occasion might have made it appropriate at least to acknowledge the tragic fate of the victims of

*Germans often see us either as dupes of our idealism or as victims of traitors. Alger Hiss is well known in Germany and in the Bundestag debate over Dr. John, Adenauer's Minister of the Interior referred knowingly to Hiss, as if to suggest that such things, after all, happen in the best of families. In this connection it is interesting that during my stay in Berlin I did not hear a critical remark about Senator McCarthy, while many students praised him as America's "leading anti-Communist."

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German deeds. I mailed the letter quickly, before second thoughts could restrain me, but his answer, swift and untroubled, reassured me: "When I was talking of German suffering I was also thinking of those who died at German hands." How nice, I thought at first, and then it dawned on me that the link between German suffering and German cruelty may indeed have been there in his silent thought, and that self-pity is a form—and the only important form in Germany today—of unappeased conscience.

II

IT IS NOT as if I spent the summer as a human Geiger counter, attuned to radiations of repentance. The pace was too quick for that. But so many of the chance remarks and political events acquired deeper meaning in the light of how Germans regarded the past. For overtly their life during the past nine years seems to have been routine and unreflective, and the "poets and thinkers" more divorced from the life of the people than ever. And I plunged into their workaday life as fully as possible.

I still remember that first night on the military train between Frankfort and Berlin, when we pulled into the Soviet Zone at the break of dawn and I saw the first Soviet soldier. He appeared at the end of a tunnel, out of nowhere, in the middle of nowhere, a solitary soldier in high boots, with a tommy gun slung across his back, like a dull picture in a magazine, but here he was in reality and in the heart of Europe. In time, it is true, the sight of Russian soldiers became usual, but it was left to an acquaintance of mine to tell me that the presence of the GI from Texas or Nebraska was truly more startling than the Russian, who had, after all, traversed Europe before. True enough perhaps, but the American soldier was a friend, and I had never known how much such unknown friends could mean.

I had been told in New York that Berlin was the most "exciting" place in Europe, what with the Russians at the other end of the subway line and a kind of competition in culture between the worlds. I was looking forward to at least a miniature version of David Riesman's delightfully profound fantasy of the Nylon War, but while Berlin is the most significant place of co-existence, and while America successfully exploits this fact, the city does not really sustain the importance attributed to it.

There is, in fact, a deceptive normality to Berlin, especially if one is thrown at once into the academic life at the Free University. Ruins and Russians become an accepted part of life, and the well-appointed stores (to say nothing of the countless *Konditoreien,* dripping with whipped cream) add a bizarre note to this city which at times celebrates itself as the outpost of freedom. West Berlin is almost a dull place, at least in the summer, and even the tough humor of the Berliners cannot dissipate the fear that the city will degenerate into utter provincialism. Imagine Washington with the Federal government moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, the museums rifled, the Library of Congress emptied, and the roads blocked. What sustains Berlin is the struggle between Americans and Russians, and the magnificent determination of the Americans to win that struggle. The airlift constituted the most dramatic instance of that resolve, but America's assistance in the establishment of the Free University may well prove to be the most enduring monument to the deeper meaning of our role.

IN A country where success stories are less common than with us, and where universities are judged as much by age and tradition as by performance, the success of the Free University is truly remarkable, and justifies the pride which its faculty and students exude. The Free University is six years old (Heidelberg is nearly six hundred years old), has ten thousand students, from East Berlin and the Soviet Zone as well as from West Berlin and West Germany, and a faculty which can hold its own among faculties throughout Germany. Even the older German universities, so aloof and incredulous six years ago, are beginning to accept the Berlin upstart as a permanent achievement of those students and few teachers who in 1947-48 rebelled against the ideological pressure of the Communists at the old university in East Berlin.

The unique origins of the Free University molded its character. Unlike most West German universities, the Free University draws its students from every walk of life. It has a system of student participation in university administration, unique in Germany, which

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surpasses, I believe, similar experiments in America. Student delegates sit in each faculty as well as in the University Senate and, in theory at least, "co-determine" policy.* But even in Berlin the old vices of German academic life are partially reappearing. As in West Germany, only on a less alarming scale, the old *Korporationen,* with their compulsory dueling and voluntary anti-Semitism, seek to regain their place. Dueling and drunkenness, however, have little appeal to students who are dependent on odd jobs and financial help for their existence.

Nor did I find any evidence of resurgent nationalism or any other extremism. The students treated my—to them—unusual interpretations of German history with sympathetic seriousness, and I came to share the belief of many democrats that this may be the first generation of German students not poisoned by chauvinism or militarism. The Free University, by force of circumstance, has bridged that gap between the political and academic life which was, and in West Germany still is, so characteristic of German universities. The Communists "forced these students to be free," and American generosity (continuing in the form of substantial Ford Foundation grants) provided the material basis for their freedom.

The spirit of the Free University, however, is all its own. It is a mixture of pride, humility, and seriousness, and sufficient good humor to overcome the persistent difficulties of inadequate facilities. While the hoarier forms of extracurricular life may be creeping back and the relative informality of its early years may be receding before revived pomposity, I think the university will for a long time to come justify the affection of its own students, as well as of the Fulbright students from America whose loyalty is almost alarming.

As for Berlin's more general pretensions to cultural vitality, I am afraid I remain unconvinced. True, I came towards the end of the season, but saw enough not to be inconsolable that I could see no more. In the magnificent new Schiller-Theater I saw the old *Hauptmann von Köpenick,* a crude play crudely produced and received. The audience, passive, even inattentive through most of the evening, responded only to the vulgarity in word and posture of a man waiting his turn to go to the toilet. In the East, the programs were superior, but the productions seemed threadbare and unimaginative. I remember wandering into one of Gorky's last plays, *Ssomow und andere,* which in the first act probes the mind and mood of counter-revolutionaries in a hostile but not stereotyped manner, and the brave activists in the audience were somewhat at a loss how to respond to this criticism of the regime. I also saw *Don Carlos,* with its dramatic plea *"Sire, geben Sie Gedankenfreiheit,"* for which the play had been banned under the Nazis. The passage received hesitant applause, but the Communists made up for it by giving the villainous Grand Inquisitor in the tragic finale a deathlike face that made him resemble Adenauer. Contrary to Western opinion, however, the Eastern theater seemed all in all no better than the Western, though in fairness I should add that I missed Brecht's *Mutter Courage* which is generally acclaimed as the greatest contemporary play and production. The drama in the East, however, was not in the "social realism" of the stage, but in the sordid realism outside.

FROM this side of the Atlantic, I had looked forward to East Berlin as a kind of forbidden experience. The first time I went there alone, I almost wished it *were* forbidden. I stayed only ten minutes, long enough to feel the terrible anguish of helplessness and the fear of arbitrariness. I remember arriving at the Eastern subway station, finding my way to the street amidst slogans and posters, and recoiling from the sight of the first *Volkspolizist,* that dreadful combination of Nazi face and Soviet uniform. I left again, thinking that those who scoff at "bourgeois values" or sham liberties ought to come here; one does not ordinarily notice the air one breathes, but tamper with it, and you choke.

It was a different sensation on a U. S. military bus, where the trip to the East was cheerfully depressing. The Eastern sector seemed like a different world, deserted, downtrodden, and destroyed, as against the

*Illustrative perhaps of many current efforts to conciliate antagonisms by "co-determination" was the unintentionally humorous remark by a high University official, praising student participation since "they are so responsible that they hardly ever speak up or give us any trouble."

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buzzing, elegant, and dynamic West—just the contrast one always reads about. On that tour, a regular army service authorized in the remote days of active co-existence, I went to the gigantic Soviet War Memorial in their half of Berlin, part of which was built from the tiles of Hitler's Chancellery. It is a formal garden, with bas-reliefs depicting scenes from the war, and on a hill at the end, a towering statue—World's Fair style—of a Soviet soldier clutching a Russian child in one hand and a sword slaying the swastika in the other. Inside the memorial chapel is the coffin of the unknown soldier, and above it a German and Russian inscription recalling the struggle against the "fascist hordes." The ideological cliché, even in the presence of death, jolted me back to the present. For it is an impressive sight, a monument not only to the Russian dead, but to the death of so many hopes and illusions.

It took me weeks to get up enough nerve to return to East Berlin alone. When I did, each excursion seemed like an adventure into past and future: so much reminded me of the Nazi past and so much had the flavor of a terrifying future. On almost every remaining wall a picture of "Big Brother"—in various guises—and on the street the police *do* watch you. The future is previewed in the celebrated showpiece known as Stalinallee: a magnificently wide boulevard, on either side of which are apartment houses built of cream-colored stone and tile, decorated in the Oriental manner with mosaic pattern and paintings. In a city so wrecked as East Berlin, Stalinallee cannot help but impress, and depress too. Is this pretentious ugliness, this fancy slum, really the ultimate fulfillment of the Communist society? And can the Communists be unaware that this showpiece of the entire "proletarian" world embodies the cruel inegalitarianism of their society which provides only for the few even as it promises to the many?

I confess Stalinallee did have a lure for me that I could not resist: the Karl Marx Buchhandlung. If there has to be a lure, books may be preferable to food, and I did not make it a practice, as many West Berliners and Americans do, of devouring the delicacies of the "people's restaurants," with caviar less than fifty cents a portion. But the bookstore, larger than Scribner's and Brentano's put together, was different, and I must have gone there six or seven times. There were thousands of books in all languages, though the "peoples' democracies" were most heavily represented; and there was a second-hand division where "bourgeois" editions of old classics could be had for next to nothing. In my search I discovered and bought a set of Herder's works, and noticed later that it carried the official stamp: "From the Jewish ghetto in Theresienstadt." The salesmen treated me with excessive politeness though I had from the first insisted upon my nationality, and I acquired a sense of security there which I felt nowhere else in East Berlin. This was dispelled quickly enough when one day from the upstairs window of the store I saw a car full of policemen parked outside, waiting for someone or something. The next half hour, until the car departed as mysteriously as it had come, was uncomfortable, and I was reminded of the protagonists of *1984* who had felt so safe in the antique store—and who were finally caught precisely in this mausoleum of the past. Much shaken, I took a taxi to the subway station closest to West Berlin and resolved that this was to be my last visit. That night I remarked to an American colleague who was grumbling about West Berlin that its justification was East Berlin, and that that was enough for me.

III

Our conversation that night turned to the political future, and to the question of whether the West could maintain its prosperous stability and attendant superiority over the East. That question needs to be asked, for this past summer marked a turning point in the development of postwar Germany. Between 1948 and the spring of 1954, Adenauer's Germany achieved a spectacular economic recovery and a degree of political stability which probably has no parallel in modern German history. That period, however, seems to have come to an end: formally with the promise of sovereignty, but more significantly in a fluidity in German life which may ultimately crystallize in a pattern less satisfactory to us than that of the recent past. Put differently, between 1945 and 1954 Germany had no live political option. She is freer now, at home and abroad, and the stability that was partly imposed from without will be severely shaken.

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Let me say at once that I do not belong to those spiteful pessimists who see Nazis in every nook and cranny. Our newspapers regularly report the rise of neo-Nazism, the triumphant return from prison of some notorious SS leader, or the desecration of Jewish cemeteries. Such desecrations may well have happened, though not as daily occurrences as one recent observer claims; but for all their human meanness, these acts would assume political significance only if a neo-Nazi movement did in fact exist. As far as I could see, it does not. Our reporters too often confuse neo-Nazis with ex-Nazis, who, undoubtedly, are making a disheartening comeback. But there is a difference, if not necessarily an edifying one, between the former Nazi who has not recanted but does not seek to restore, and the new Nazi who, like a 19th-century Bonapartist, yearns to do it all over again. Of the many Nazis who have made their way back I know of none who openly advocates the restoration of totalitarianism or any of its characteristic features. My guess is that there are very few "Bonapartists" in Germany today, if only because Hitler was no Napoleon.

THE danger to West Germany does not come from the extreme right, or from the extreme left, which is virtually nonexistent. It comes from the removal of external restraints and the other successes which Adenauer has achieved. And it manifests itself in a weakening of Adenauer's hold and an incipient splintering of the middle. West Germany has suffered from "too much and too soon," and the adage that nothing succeeds like success is not here applicable.

In his sincere efforts to attach West Germany to Europe, Adenauer has had the support of the United States, the fanatic following of a few German youths who had become obsessed by the "European idea," and the acquiescence of the large majority of West Germans who could not think of a better policy. While the European idea as a *mystique* is dead, the achievements of his rule remain and are to be crowned shortly by the ratification of the Paris treaties. But these successes make him all the more vulnerable. He has accomplished all that he could, things that only he could have achieved, and now he can be criticized and attacked with impunity.

This falling away from Adenauer's policy began even before the death of EDC. The appearance of adventurers this spring—Dr. Brüning and Herr Pfleiderer—was a mere straw in an easterly wind. Dr. John's defection and the subsequent pilgrimage of Adenauer's party colleague Schmidt-Wittmack to East Germany suggest more dangerous squalls and incidentally, for the first time since the division in 1948, gave the East a temporary propagandistic edge. Then came the rejection of EDC, for which Bonn was apparently no better prepared than we were. In a series of anxious improvisations the United States sought to strengthen Adenauer, seemingly unaware that our unqualified help may easily weaken his position. For when our Secretary of State demonstrates to the German public that he finds the road to Bonn faster and more pleasant than, say, the road to Paris, the Germans conclude that Adenauer is no longer indispensable, that with the certainty of American support a bolder policy can now be embarked upon. By giving Adenauer too much we have encouraged his people to give him too little, and the immediate result may be seen in the intense agitation over the Saar, which some months back would have been unthinkable.

BUT even granting the eagerness of some Germans to break away from Adenauer's sober policies, they will sooner or later come up against the ultimate limitations on their freedom of action. The East-West conflict has enabled Germany to regain its sovereignty and strength, but from this time on will impose ineluctable restraints. Germany —whether unified or not—has at last been dwarfed by the very powers she herself brought to Europe by her aggression and whose continued presence in Central Europe is now guaranteed by their mutual fear. Thus West Germany's potential for good on our side outweighs her conceivable capacity for mischief. And since I do not believe that the West Germans will join the Soviets—if only because the continued presence of Allied troops would make this most difficult —or that the Soviets will voluntarily abandon East Germany, it is unlikely that reunification will become a live possibility, though it will probably emerge as the center of constant political manipulation which will give it the *appearance* of a serious question.

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There is, at present, no strong irredentist feeling in West Germany, least of all among those social groups that are sharing in her prosperity. Unification, they know, would pose dangerous problems and impose heavy economic burdens on the West. The Soviets have expropriated the large land-owning class in Prussia and nationalized most sectors of the economy, and the West would either have to accept this settlement or try to put Humpty Dumpty together again. Potentially this is a most explosive issue, since the Socialists could not accept restitution or the centrists the *fait accompli*. It is probable, therefore, that the present tendency to pay lip service to reunification and to concentrate on one's own business will continue. Most East Germans, one might add, hate their Communist regime, but after twelve years of Nazi propaganda and nine of Soviet, it is unlikely that Bonn's parliamentary democracy attracts them enthusiastically. And so one arrives at the pedestrian conclusion that Germany will continue to live as a divided nation—which would, of course, constitute no great reversal of its historic traditions.

In domestic politics it is the same story of the self-defeating quality of Adenauer's success. He has been the most successful statesman, and among the successful the most admirable, of modern Germany. He is also a great man, not unaware of his exceptional stature, and he has become impatient with smaller men, lesser minds, and ultimately with opposition itself. His leadership and the imposed restraints from abroad held his party and coalition together, but the signs of political discontent are multiplying. He may patch up the cracks as they appear, but the coalition will not survive him, and given the sorry state of the opposition, one realizes that his mantle will not automatically fall on another: neither an Attlee nor an Eden is waiting in the wings, but at best a well-meaning Caprivi. And at such a time, the political power of certain groups, notably big business and the bureaucracy, which Adenauer has kept in check, may emerge in alarming strength.

When I first came to Germany I doubted that the Germans could really develop a democracy. The summer months taught me that I was wrong, but I left Germany with the fear that a promising beginning is being severely threatened. Franz Neumann, whose tragic death this summer deprived us of one of the most penetrating observers of modern Germany, wrote four years ago, "The West has so far won the battle for Germany." This was still true six months ago, but new dangers will arise when the present coalition disintegrates, probably at the same time that American influence will at least be weakened by the establishment of the new German army, a force that historically has never tended to sustain democratic or even civilian government.

In the ensuing struggle it will be difficult to find another broad union, and as so often in German politics, the opposition to the existing regime is divided and unprepared. The Socialist party remains the most sincerely democratic group but lacks personalities, program, and power. It still seems to be torn between its imaginary revolutionary tradition and its real, conservative attachment to democracy; at the S.P.D. *Parteitag*, which I attended, the leader of the party demanded "the erection of a new society, not the restoration of the old," and, a few paragraphs later, denounced Adenauer for scuttling a local coalition between his party and the Socialists. Does he really suppose that the German conservatives will legislate a socialist program, as English Tories upon occasion do? Or does he think that because the S.P.D. now wants to be like the British Labor party, its political opponents will obligingly turn into a Conservative party, ready to share power and responsibility equally? Lastly, the trade unions, by accepting political neutrality as the price of unity, have agreed, at least formally, to their own political impotence and thus deprived the Bonn Republic of one of the pillars of Weimar. If Bonn nevertheless remains stronger today than Weimar ever was, it is primarily because its enemies are weaker and not because its defenders are stronger. And still I fear that the day will come when we will discover that political instability, a monopoly of which we have angrily attributed to the French, could take a far more dangerous form in Germany.

All this, however, is still in the future. Set against the vicious tone and violent action of the Weimar period, the tone of present-day German politics is polite, perhaps

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even dull—as H. Stuart Hughes has noted in COMMENTARY (November 1954). That fewer cries of "traitor" and "swine" have been bandied about in the Bundestag than in the old Reichstag may attest an improvement in manners, and it certainly bespeaks the powerful though indirect restraint which our occupation represents. In the recent debate over Dr. John, Adenauer's Minister of the Interior Schroeder promised that once "the shackles [of occupation] are removed" one would be able to talk more freely. These shackles have in fact protected the Republic, and their removal may unleash the more violent political passions which so far have been suppressed. Then it is likely that the deeper divisions in German society, which I have already mentioned, will show up in political life as well, and that the ugly tone of negation and resentment, which I sensed running strong underneath the surface, may erupt and poison the new society.

IF AND when that happens, the lack of young leaders will intensify the crisis of the new German democracy. The best Germans have always disdained politics, and during the Weimar Republic men of the stature of Heuss and Adenauer were hardly known—or quickly assassinated. In the Bonn Republic, politics seem no more attractive, and today's youth, so far as I could tell, is not likely to seek active political responsibility. Among the older generation, the most promising men were exiled, or killed in the 20th of July movement, and the silent sympathizers of that movement find it repugnant to work alongside ex-Nazis. And here we do share some responsibility with the Germans: not that we failed in "de-Nazification"—the task, it will be remembered, was quickly and properly turned over to the Germans, who botched it—but that we too readily retreated from our moral condemnation of those who publicly benefited and only "inwardly" suffered from the Nazi regime. We thus may have helped, unwittingly to be sure, to alienate those Germans who refused all advancement under the Nazis and who in the postwar years could have been encouraged to enter positions of power. (Only a few weeks ago, a resolutely anti-Nazi professor, visiting this country, complained to me that a prominent ex-Nazi had been invited to attend an important festivity at an American university: "I felt as if I had been slapped in the face.") As it is, when the present septuagenarians retire, their places will be taken by default, and the decline of political life in Germany will have commenced.

The last person I talked to in Germany was a Scandinavian priest, imprisoned and tortured by the Gestapo, liberated at the end of the war by the British, and since then the head of an international students' house in a small German university town. For nine years he had tried to reform his former enemies, and he was proud of his past successes. His words of parting I repeat sadly—and in that sadness perhaps lies my own best gain from the summer: "I am leaving Germany. The atmosphere is becoming unbearable."

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THE TREE

A Story

ABRAHAM REISEN

IT WAS a long street; at least in the small Jewish town it was considered the longest. It contained forty small houses, excepting the deserted ruin in which no one had been living for ten years. The inhabitants of this street were all Jewish. Even the one Gentile who lived there was also half a Jew: he spoke Yiddish, had taken on many Jewish ways, and lived in a Jewish house with a *mezuzah* on the doorpost.

There were two wells in the street: one operated with a hooked staff, and the other with a wheel. In addition, the street had two pits where the children played in the sand, and two rather deep gutters along the sides.

Understandably enough, the long street was not densely planted with trees. The Jewish residents well knew that once, in the Land of Israel, each Jew sat beneath his vine and fig-tree; they also knew of the cedars of Lebanon and of other trees mentioned in Scriptures. But now, in foreign lands, they understood little about trees and their growth. Among the schoolboys of the town there circulated a theory that if one were to plant the seeds of an apple, in the course of time a tree would grow up. But this was merely conjecture; the boys had no genuine belief in it and were even too uninterested to experiment with planting such seeds.

And so the long street possessed a single tree, and to everyone it was a mystery how it ever got there.

Not even the owner of the tree, Chaim Yankel the tailor, knew who had planted it and how it grew up. His father certainly was not responsible, for when Chaim Yankel was yet a child the tree was as large and thick as now. Chaim Yankel's patrimony had descended to him through six previous generations. Possibly the land had once belonged to a Gentile and the Gentile had planted it.

BUT whatever its history, the long street had a tree, and the tree belonged to Chaim Yankel the tailor. The tree grew near his house at a window which faced the street, and Chaim Yankel could, during his work, look out at the tree, which he loved more than anything else in the world.

In autumn, when the wind blew, the branches would stir and rustle sadly in his window as if wishing to tell some gloomy, endless tale; and then Chaim Yankel would grow moody, the needle seemed to leap from his fingers until he put it entirely from his hand; and, leaning against the window, he would grow pensive and murmur in a half-broken voice: "Then as Jeremiah went on the graves of his ancestors. . . ." And in the room would be heard the quiet steps of the dead.

In the summer, however, the tree made a deeper impression on Chaim Yankel; there was then little work and much time to daydream, and in the idle hours he would lie under the tree. The branches rustled quietly,

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THE "long street" of this story by ABRAHAM REISEN is the very one on which Reisen was born, in Kaidanov, Russia, in 1876. He died in New York City, in 1953. By the time he had come to the United States to settle permanently, in 1914, he had an international reputation as a poet and short-story writer, so prolific that in 1917 he could already issue fourteen volumes of his collected writings. His works were translated into many languages and he himself also wrote in Hebrew and Russian. Much of his work in America appeared in the *Forward*, *Zukunft*, and various other periodicals. "The Tree," which was originally published in Warsaw in 1901, has been here translated by Samuel A. Weiss.

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a bird slipped onto them and chirped, and Chaim Yankel would close his eyes and meditate on matters of greater import than scissors and iron.

During the summer Sabbaths, when it was hot, some neighbors, too, would come after dinner to repose under the tree.

Then Chaim Yankel would enjoy a signal honor. Tovia the Gemara teacher would come, a tall, emaciated Jew with sunken cheeks. Tovia spoke very quietly and gently, and Chaim Yankel admired him greatly.

"We shall rest a while under your tree, Reb Chaim Yaakov," Tovia would say quietly, stretching himself out with a weary smile under the tree and avoiding Chaim Yankel's eyes while speaking.

"Oh, with the greatest of pleasure, Reb Tovia!" Chaim Yankel almost shouted. "With the greatest of pleasure! Rest yourself, why not!"

"'Like unto man is a tree of the field,'" Tovia quoted moodily, lying under the tree. "A tree, Reb Chaim Yaakov, is similar to a person."

And Reb Chaim Yaakov would raise his eyes, study the branches of the tree, the trunk, as if seeking the similitude between tree and man. He discovered no great similarity, but he answered: "Certainly, what then, Reb Tovia?"

"But a tree lives longer than a man!" Reb Tovia immediately contradicted himself and fell to coughing.

Reb Tovia coughed long and with difficulty, and every cough seemed to Chaim Yankel a voice that said: "Reb Tovia will soon die, he is consumptive, and the tree will outlive us all."

On other Sabbaths, Zerech Breines, the rich man of the street, would come to rest under the tree. Zerech had his tailoring done elsewhere, but Chaim Yankel would not avenge himself by driving him from his tree. On the contrary, he welcomed him very cordially, as if to show the rich man that he was not concerned with his patronage.

"A fine tree!" Reb Zerech would remark, scanning the trunk. "If you were to chop the tree up you'd have enough kindling for a winter. I am surprised that you don't chop it up, Chaim Yankel."

Chaim Yankel would grow incensed at the suggestion. "The pig! He'd devour everything!" he thought inwardly. But he answered Reb Zerech politely: "We're not allowed to chop down a tree, Reb Zerech, we're not allowed! It's sinful even to mention it. A tree, Reb Tovia says, is like a person. . . ."

"A tree is like a person," Reb Tovia echoed drowsily.

"Oh, nonsense, that's only a parable!" the rich man gestured with his hand. "Well, we have to take a nap. If you'll wake me about three o'clock, I'll go drink a glass of tea."

THE tree, however, had one shortcoming. It bore fruit, and this caused Chaim Yankel difficulties. If the fruit were at least valuable then the misfortune would, perhaps, not be so great. Chaim Yankel would have the tree fenced off from the public street. Or he would lease it to Zelig the gardener, who would know how to devise some means of keeping the tree out of mischievous hands.

But all that grew on the tree was wild apples, which first became at all fit to eat late in the winter when, after lying in the garret, they were well frozen through. Even then their taste was hardly fit for decent men. The only other value the apples had was as treatment for coal fumes, and Freda, Chaim Yankel's wife, did as a matter of fact revive the entire family by means of these apples when they were overcome with the fumes of the heated presses.

The street urchins, however, were unconcerned with the fact that the apples were wild. And as soon as August arrived and the apples appeared, they would besiege the tree every afternoon, throw sticks and stones at the branches most thickly laden with apples, and, raising a hue and cry, fill their pockets with plunder.

A tremor of rage passed through Chaim Yankel when he caught sight of the band of children; like one scalded he would dash out

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of the house, dropping his bit of work on the ground, and roar: "Tramps, what do you want from the tree? I'll kill you!"

The street urchins were startled at first and, shouting and whistling, took to their heels. But a little while later, noticing that Chaim Yankel had returned to the house, they gathered again and attacked the tree.

And then began a life and death struggle. Chaim Yankel took to weapons and, brandishing a stick, he chased after the band of children like a wild tiger. The boys would run off laughing and cheering and run back again.

At times, Chaim Yankel's patience gave out altogether, and he would chase the children a long distance. Then the street would break into an uproar. Bearded Jews, women, and children would run out of their houses and ask each other in alarm: "What's the matter?"

Soon, however, the tumult would subside and one would calm the other, saying: "Nothing, nothing: Chaim Yankel the tailor is chasing the boys. Some tailor! Ask why does he grudge them the apples? More than a bellyache you don't get from them."

So insulting an opinion about his apples enraged Chaim Yankel yet more, and angrily he would seize a youngster and give him a slap.

"Ow! Ow!" the child would begin to howl. "Why is he hitting me? I didn't do anything."

"Bessie! They're beating your son," one of the neighbors would generously inform the boy's mother.

"May lightning strike you!" The mother ran to defend her child. "Why are you hitting my boy? Do you feed him? May worms feed on you! Such a business! He has a piece of tree with poisonous apples, and the whole street has to be in an uproar!"

And the residents of the street would attack Chaim Yankel and severely scold him. The more sober householders, however, would gently rebuke him:

"Say yourself, how is it that a Jew with a beard is not ashamed to have such nonsense in mind? Tree, shmee! It's fit for a heathen, not a Jew. Children—they tear, let them tear! Do the apples have any value? Phoo, disgusting!"

"I don't care about the apples," Chaim Yankel answered in a tearful voice. "They are damaging the tree. They break the branches. . . ."

"Branches, shmanches!" the grave householders further rebuked him. "Well, say yourself, aren't you worse than the children? Much you should care! Go home and go back to your work. Phoo, disgusting! A Jew with a beard!"

Hearing such a reprimand, Chaim Yankel felt like a child who has committed some folly. He glanced with embarrassment at the speaker, then at his beard, smiled foolishly, and returned home.

Approaching his house after such an incident, Chaim Yankel would pause by the tree. On the earth were scattered bits of broken twigs, and above, at the top of the tree, dangled some broken branches. Chaim Yankel gazed at the broken twigs, sighed, and with a heavy heart he entered the house.

A decade passed. And the passing years left several marks in the street. The deserted ruin was demolished in accordance with a new decree that forbade such houses to remain. Tovia the teacher broke once into heavy coughing, could not catch his breath, and expired. Zerech the rich man, eager to increase his wealth, speculated on three hundred poods of dried berries, lost his fortune and those of twenty-five other persons, and became a poor man.

And the tree still stood in the street, and in the fall, when the wind blew and the branches sadly rustled, Chaim Yankel still murmured the same tune and same words: "Then as Jeremiah went on the graves of his ancestors. . . ."

Summertime, during the idle periods, he lay under the tree and meditated on matters of higher import than scissors and iron. In August, he was still at odds with the schoolboys who came to beleaguer the tree, and the

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street was still thrown into an uproar: apples, tree, Chaim Yankel!

More years passed.

On the tombstone of Tovia several words were now obliterated. Zerech the rich man was now wholly a pauper. Freda, Chaim Yankel's wife, died. Chaim Yankel was white-haired. And the tree still stood.

But even the tree was not the same.

"I don't know what has happened to the tree," Chaim Yankel occasionally confided to a friend. "It seems more bent, the branches are thinner—not at all like it used to be."

And no one ever answered him: "Foolish tailor, still makes a to-do with his tree. It smells, one would think, of graveyard leaves. He ought rather to be saying his Psalms, preparing himself for the 'other place.' "

And Chaim Yankel, with dim eyes and heavy heart, observed how the one and only tree of the street was slowly dying along with him.

"The children killed it!" he would weep quietly. "The tree there, it's dying."

And Chaim Yankel recalled Tovia's words: Like unto man is a tree of the field.

"He was a learned Jew; too bad he died." Chaim Yankel sighed at such moments, leaning against the window pane and listening to the tree barely rustling with its few, remaining branches. And Chaim Yankel fell into a dark mood of melancholy.

ENCORE

HOWARD HARRISON

When will he come? The Jew keeps us waiting.
On and off the boards since Buchenwald
Was blasted open, but now he'll come
To play indefinitely, and keep us entertained
For years. Who can see the end of this great
Tragic actor, older than Prometheus,
As old as Abraham, but yet modern.
He suits our taste as he changes costume,
Now in modern dress, then with a skullcap,
A long black coat, a beard—
Cut it off! we'd know him
Four generations removed—and more.

He is introduced by many tunes—
Tonight the Viennese waltz and Wagner's power
Subdue themselves to welcome Russian drums
Along with bassoons of Czechoslovakia.

The hero this time to match the eternal Jew
Has studied well in Aryan schools, but shook hands
With Jew just now, to show that in the play
The slaughter of the scapegoat is nothing personal.
The Jew is very understanding, see
A smile is on his face, and he is fat—
But that will go—wait—the lights grow dim,
The world yawns; we know how it will end—
But the paths of death are numerous
And some sharp taste always comes
To keep our interest. Hush—
The Jew, such a rich voice, begins
To wail in minor key. Such pathos!
His face is pale, and the terror in his eyes
Makes us shudder—could it be real!
The anguish and the blood return to us
All horrors of our Sodom and Pompeii.
As in a dream we look at our hands,
We feel no pain, there is no life
But a pale red reflection of the sweeping curtain.
We know we are safe, but the Jew mocks us.
Oh! we are fools to watch—no more of this.
Let the Jew hang himself, but we
Shall walk outside onto the white snow
And let the cold air unflush our cheeks.
We shall come again to see the Jew.

Howard Harrison was born in New York City and took his bachelor's and master's degrees at City College. This is his first appearance in our pages.

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FOUR RABBIS IN SEARCH OF AMERICAN JUDAISM

Commentary on a History of Boston's Temple Israel

NATHAN GLAZER

IT SEEMS to have become a custom among American Jews for the larger congregations to publish books to mark the celebration of their fiftieth, seventy-fifth, or hundredth birthday. In 1954 Temple Israel of Boston celebrated its centenary and, following this pattern, brought out *Growth and Achievement: Temple Israel, 1854-1954* (edited by Arthur Mann and printed for the Board of Trustees of Temple Adath Israel by the Riverside Press in Cambridge). *Growth and Achievement* at first glance looks like many other such books: it is privately published, a picture of the present building of the congregation is stamped in gold on the cloth cover, the frontispiece shows another view of the building, and portraits of the various rabbis of Temple Israel are scattered through the text.

But there the resemblance ends. The members of the congregation charged with the responsibility of producing a memorial volume apparently decided to forego honoring past and present trustees and presidents, and to commission a serious historical study. Their commemorative volume is almost unique among books of this kind in that it has been written, for the most part, by professional historians. The book is introduced by Oscar Handlin; there are brief chapters on the Jews of the United States and Boston in 1854 by Bertram W. Korn and Lee M. Friedman; a longer chapter by Moses Rischin sketches the history of the congregation; and then follow four chapters on the rabbis of Temple Israel by Arthur Mann which form a major contribution to the history of Jewish —and American—religious life.

It would probably not be wise for other congregational histories to concentrate on the rabbis; but Temple Israel has had for rabbis over the past seventy-five years a group of men who, either because of real distinction, or a remarkable capacity to grasp and mirror the contemporary religious situation among Jews, form an almost perfect paradigm of Jewish religious development in America; and this account of the major rabbis of Temple Israel is consequently also an account of American Jewish religious thinking.

THE story begins with Solomon Schindler, who fled from Germany in 1871 for political reasons—he was a school teacher and had denounced Bismarck—and who, faced with the necessity of earning a living, became a rabbi, a calling he had been trained for but had no interest in following. He came to Temple Israel in 1874 and found that the liberal atmosphere of Boston, and the desire of his congregation to "modernize" Jewish religious practice, gave him a perfect field for working out his own ideas. The first step was simple—Schindler made Temple Israel, until then a standard German Jewish Orthodox synagogue, a Reform temple, bringing it in line with a tendency which, at that time, seemed close to unifying all of American Jewry under Reform.

Schindler passionately embraced Amer-

TEMPLE ISRAEL in Boston has enjoyed a succession of notable rabbis in its one hundred years of existence: Solomon Schindler, Charles Fleischer, Harry Levi, Joshua Loth Liebman, and today, Roland B. Gittelsohn. NATHAN GLAZER here describes the changing religious character and thinking of Temple Israel's rabbis and finds in them an "almost perfect paradigm of Jewish religious development in America." Mr. Glazer, a former associate editor of COMMENTARY, and now with the publishing house of Doubleday, will deliver a series of lectures on "Judaism in America" this spring at the University of Chicago, under the auspices of the Walgreen Foundation.

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ican ideas, and soon showed the kind of amazing competence and confidence in becoming an American that we find in so many immigrant intellectuals of the 19th century. Thus Schindler, who had arrived in this country at the age of twenty-nine, wrote a sequel, in English, to Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, and his sermons were reprinted in a Boston newspaper—and used to drum up circulation! We are reminded of Isaac Mayer Wise devouring American culture in the State Library at Albany twenty-five years before, and of Francis Lieber, who became editor of the Encyclopedia Americana almost on his arrival in America. This kind of intellectual adaptation and assimilation is almost inconceivable today—either because the immigrant intellectuals are different, or because America is different.

Schindler rejected all supernatural ideas, any idea of the special truth of Judaism, any idea of revelation, and by the end of his tenure at Temple Israel was not even using the guarded language that, one suspects, concealed for many 19th-century reformers the fact that they did not believe in God. He preached the coming of the universal religion of reason and science.

One is always astonished to read of these radical positions taken up by 19th-century Jewish Reform rabbis scarcely a generation removed from the ghetto. For the Christians there was, after all, a long tradition of rationalism, and the naturalistic religions of the 19th century could be seen as the final consequence of centuries of religious and philosophical thought. But the Jews found it possible to leap immediately from medieval ritualism—there is no other name for the Judaism of the 18th century—to the acceptance of the most advanced ideas. Perhaps, indeed, the emphasis on ritualism and the shunning of all religious thought, at least as the West understood it, was just what made possible this radical leap. If one has no ideas in particular about God or revelation, it is probably easier to think anything of them. In any case, Schindler's congregation did not balk at his lectures (they were hardly sermons) in which he expounded his ideas. Religious (or anti-religious) ideas, even in those days, could not, it seems, arouse a Jewish congregation.

When Schindler went on to advocate intermarriage (why should believers in reason preserve meaningless separation?), to espouse national socialism (the ideas of Edward Bellamy), and to unveil his agnosticism, the congregation found that matters had gone too far. As Dr. Mann sums it up: "The [congregants] wished to retain their Jewish identity; Schindler wished to destroy it"; and further, "[they] did not wish to revolutionize society; they wanted to belong to it." One may hazard the guess that intermarriage (and perhaps socialism) really shocked them, while agnosticism only made them fear the censure of non-Jewish Boston.

THE next rabbi, Charles Fleischer, recapitulates, with an interesting *fin-de-siècle* variation, the story of Solomon Schindler. Fleischer was also an immigrant from Germany, but he had arrived here very young and received his entire education in this country. A graduate of Hebrew Union College, he came to Temple Israel at the amazingly early age of twenty-three. His patron saint, we are told, was Emerson. To Schindler's rationalism and naturalism, Fleischer added a kind of pale aestheticism: the second time around at Temple Israel the enlightenment ideas of Schindler seem to have lost some of their rough-hewn simplicity. He became a leading figure in Boston, and moved steadily closer to the line that divided Jews, not from Christians, but from other lovers of reason.

Fleischer participated fully in the intellectual, social, and cultural life of New England, counting in his circle such community leaders as President Eliot of Harvard and important magazine editors. As rabbi, he used his pulpit to introduce reformers, inaugurated Sunday services as a permanent feature in his temple, and was the first to exchange pulpits with Unitarian and Trinitarian clergymen. In everything he did, he seemed to reject "the parochialism of race and religion."

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In 1911, there were exciting moments at Temple Israel. Schindler, who had spent the previous twenty years as a socialist propagandist, now reappeared in the pulpit of Temple Israel, at the age of seventy—we must imagine him with his prophet's beard—to announce he had been converted to traditional Judaism, and to denounce the changes he had started at Temple Israel almost forty years earlier. Fleischer defended himself; more than that, he stated openly and unequivocally that he no longer saw any reason for the separate existence of Jews or Judaism. That year he left to form the Boston Sunday Commons, a kind of humanist church, and in 1922, he left with his wife, the former Mabel R. Leslie, for New York, where he joined the editorial staff of Hearst's *Evening Journal*.*

For the next thirty years there were no adventures in religious thinking for Temple Israel (and indeed, for American Jewry in general; the radicalism of 19th-century Reform has not been equaled since within Judaism). Harry Levi, the next rabbi, was born in the United States of immigrant Polish parents. "For the first time," writes Dr. Mann, "Boston's Reform synagogue had a pastor of the flock rather than the creator of an intellectual system. . . . He did not, like Fleischer or Schindler, shock or startle or develop the desire to be different from his congregants. . . . Even in physical appearance—of average height and build, bespectacled, dignified and restrained—[he differed] from the intense-looking, bearded Schindler, and the almost excessively handsome Fleischer. Temple Israel's rabbi was like most native, middle-class, American men."

Rabbi Levi, one gains the impression from Dr. Mann's account, also settled, at least temporarily, the conflict between the traditional conception of the Jewish rabbi—as expounder of the Jewish Law—and the Western Christian idea of the pastor or minister by adopting almost completely the latter role; and beyond this he had taken on a completely new role—that of Jewish representative to the Gentiles. Here we must point to a rather subtle but extremely important difference between the relations with Gentiles of Rabbis Schindler and Fleischer and Rabbi Levi. To some extent, Rabbis Schindler and Fleischer also represented the Jews. But far more important to the image they presented to Boston was the role they assumed as free intellectuals. They enjoyed freedom to participate fully in Boston's intellectual life, even while they were rabbis, because the Jewish community itself was still uncertain about just what a modern rabbi should be.

By Rabbi Levi's time, the congregation knew that their minister's task was to stand at the head of his community and subordinate his personal views to the community's best interest. In the time of Rabbis Schindler and Fleischer, the bewildered laity, listening to lectures, had chafed under the intellectual demands of its rabbis; now, it is the rabbi who, if he has any ideas, chafes under the restraint put on him by his congregation, and finds it better to develop his ideas in private. Having lost the habits of obedience inculcated by observance, having developed a middle-class self-confidence, the contemporary Jewish congregation does not often stand for uncomfortable talk from the pulpit.

From 1911 to 1939 Temple Israel was happy in its possession of Rabbi Levi. Meanwhile, the American Jewish scene was quite transformed under the impact of the immigration and acculturation of millions of East European Jewish immigrants. Reform was utterly strange to them, and the best Reform could hope for was to maintain its positions or, here and there, retreat in good order. In time the newcomers or their children would be ready for Reform. By that time Reform itself had bent under the pressure, and one found fewer Sunday services, more Hebrew in the service, a greater acceptance of Zionism, and the idea that the Jews were a people.

One might think, in this context, that Temple Israel's next rabbi, Joshua Loth

*See Arthur Mann's fuller treatment of Fleischer in his article "Charles Fleischer's Religion of Democracy" in the June 1954 COMMENTARY.

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Liebman, author of the best-seller *Peace of Mind,* was quite unrelated, in his passion for psychotherapy, to what was going on in American Jewish life. But I think not. By 1939, the process of religious development, which had been halted by the mass immigration of elements that had first, so to speak, to be brought up to date before they could get into the argument, was ready to get under way again. The intellectual problems with which the 19th-century reformers had wrestled, dormant for forty years while the immigrant Jews were being acculturated, began to recover their urgency. Most briefly put, the problem was: if one accepts a naturalistic, rational, and liberal outlook, as the great mass of modern Jews do, what is one to do with the Jewish religion? What is one to think of the Law, which, as every Jewish child is supposed to learn, Moses handed down to us?

The answer of 19th-century Reform was bold and consistent: the Law is the work of men, not God, the modern age speaks with the voice of God as emphatically as did antiquity. But the danger of this answer was soon made clear; it left no reason to remain a Jew, and two successive rabbis of Temple Israel came to this conclusion.

The answer of the 20th century, which came in a number of forms, of which Rabbi Liebman's marriage of psychotherapy with religion was one, was more evasive: true, the Law is the work of men, and revelation is continuous (which, one suspects, means not that God speaks to the modern age but that one is permitted to doubt whether he ever spoke to former ages); but religion stores up wisdom, and the Jewish religion more than any other. As Rabbi Liebman wrote in *Peace of Mind,* "By religion I mean the accumulated spiritual wisdom and ethical precepts dating from the time of the earliest prophets and gradually formulated into a body of tested truth for man's moral guidance and spiritual at-homeness in the universe."

In effect, Rabbi Liebman's was one of a number of efforts to suggest a role for the Jewish religion in a non-believing age: it would express the liberal and ameliorative outlook of American Jews. While some rabbis spoke of Judaism's contribution to mental health, others spoke of Zionism, liberal politics, culture, civil liberties and civil rights, and so on. Judaism was to become "contemporary" through the rabbis' expressing the enlightened opinions of the age. Everywhere it could be heard that Judaism was democracy or liberalism or what have you.

But inevitably all these answers, satisfactory as they might be for some time and some people, are shown to be intellectual evasions. Judaism is a religion, not a compendium of sound ideas. And, having reached a point where most of the social and economic problems of American Jews are relatively minor, and where even Zionism no longer offers much meat for sermons, we are right up against the naked question of religion again—just as the Jews of America were in 1874, when Rabbi Schindler first came to Temple Israel.

And perhaps we should not be surprised to find that Rabbi Gittelsohn, the present leader of Temple Israel, is as sensitive to the intellectual atmosphere as his predecessors were. He writes, in the concluding chapter of this volume: ". . . The synagogue has outgrown some of its previous roles in American life. It is no longer an essential center for the social and communal activity of the American Jew. . . . Nor is the synagogue any longer an exclusive sponsor even of Jewish education. . . . Nor . . . is the synagogue as greatly needed now as it once was to provide general cultural opportunity. . . . If [it] is less indispensable than before in these respects, it is far more essential in providing a functioning religious orientation for its members."

We seem, in American Judaism, to stand again where Schindler and Temple Israel stood eighty years ago. Many things have changed, but one big thing remains the same —the intellectual challenge presented to American Jews by their age-old religion. It will be interesting to see just where Temple Israel will have arrived fifty years from now.

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STRANGE DOINGS AT "ANIMAL FARM"

A Case Study in Cultural Hocus-Pocus: New York 1954-55

SPENCER BROWN

PUBLISHED in 1946, George Orwell's *Animal Farm* remains to this day, in my opinion, the best of anti-Communist books. If we had to do without all the others, fine as some of them are—Koestler, Dallin, Silone, Borkenau, Serge, and the rest—and were left with Orwell alone, we could still get by. For no other writer has shown us so clearly the worst tragedy of our age, worse in one respect at least than the crimes of the Nazis, for the Soviet tyranny combines with its terror the utter perversion of man's highest ideals.

The story is a detailed parallel with the Russian Revolution and its aftermath, from 1917 to 1945. The drunken farmer Jones flees from his mistreated and aroused animals, who, following the teachings of the late boar Major, set up an egalitarian commonwealth and attempt to run the farm by and for themselves. Few of them, unfortunately, are intelligent enough to do anything but heavy labor, and the direction of things gradually devolves upon the pigs, who lead a successful defense against Jones's armed intervention. A struggle for power develops between the two leading pigs, Napoleon (Stalin) and Snowball (Trotsky). Napoleon, by means of his Chekist (GPU, NKVD, MVD) dogs, exiles Snowball, seizes absolute power, and sets about building a windmill (the Dnieper Dam, symbol of Russia's industrialization) originally planned by Snowball.

The hardest work is done by the horse Boxer, who represents the long suffering, toiling, loyal Russian people. Because of faulty construction, the windmill collapses and, when rebuilt, is again destroyed by a neighboring farmer, Frederick (Hitler), who attacks Animal Farm shortly after swindling Napoleon in a timber deal. Frederick's men are at last routed, at terrible cost. Wounded in the war but still working to rebuild the mill, the superannuated Boxer is sent to the knacker's to be boiled down for glue. Napoleon has by this time revised all the egalitarian principles of Animalism, originally enunciated by Major and codified by Snowball, to read: "All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others." Having assumed human vices, Napoleon gives a banquet for another neighbor, Pilkington (the English ruling classes), at which they drink each other's health colossally and cheat each other in a card game. The bewildered animal slaves, watching from outside the windows, can no longer tell which is man and which is pig.

THE parallels with the Russian Revolution are three and four to the page. Indeed, some critics wholly friendly to Orwell and his anti-Communism find this plain, point-by-point historical correspondence an artistic defect. I cannot agree. I find *Animal Farm* a *tour de force,* but one of such extraordinary ease and realism in every phrase and incident that it is a masterpiece apart from the satire, and also a masterpiece of satire in which moral purity and breadth of human sympathy are combined with crushing wit.

GEORGE Orwell's famous satire on Russian Communism, *Animal Farm,* has recently been brought to the screen as a full-length animated cartoon. In the peculiarly guarded manner with which the film has been advertised and reviewed, SPENCER BROWN discovers a fable for our time almost as cogent as the story of *Animal Farm* itself. Mr. Brown teaches English literature at the Fieldston School in New York City and has been a frequent contributor to our pages, most recently with his article "Late Autumn of the 'Liberal Drama'" in the December issue.

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At the center of *Animal Farm* is Orwell's sadness, and our sadness, as the hope of our century transforms itself before our eyes into total evil:

> Never had the farm—and with a kind of surprise they remembered that it was their own farm, every inch of it their own property—appeared to the animals so desirable a place. As Clover looked down the hillside her eyes filled with tears. If she could have spoken her thoughts, it would have been to say that this was not what they had aimed at when they set themselves years ago to work for the overthrow of the human race. These scenes of terror and slaughter were not what they had looked forward to on that night when old Major first stirred them to rebellion. If she herself had had any picture of the future, it had been of a society of animals set free from hunger and the whip, all equal, each working according to his capacity, the strong protecting the weak, as she had protected the lost brood of ducklings with her foreleg on the night of Major's speech. Instead—she did not know why—they had come to a time when no one dared speak his mind, when fierce, growling dogs roamed everywhere, and when you had to watch your comrades torn to pieces after confessing shocking crimes.

This is George Orwell at his best, and our century at its best. Being unable to make a wreath of my own, I lay his wreath on his grave.

Now *Animal Farm* has been made into a full-length cartoon film by the English husband-and-wife team of John Halas and Joy Batchelor. Released by Louis de Rochemont Associates, it opened at the Paris Theater in New York on December 29. And thereby hangs more of a tale than the hopes and disappointments of animals.

Much of the satire of Orwell's novel—or for that matter of such similar works as *Gulliver's Travels* and *Penguin Island*—must remain inaccessible to this or any film. The wry, laconic understatement, the backlash of wit, can be selected from but not rendered entire, for the pace of the motion picture is incomparably slower than that of prose fiction. Nevertheless the film has many merits, stemming chiefly from Orwell's ingenuity in incident and his marvelous knack of securing the suspension of disbelief by sympathetic and detailed realism.

It has certain defects, too, worst among which is the animators' revision of the ending: the sorrow of Orwell's animals is unrelieved, intensified finally by the realization that their revolution and suffering have been in vain, that their pig-exploiters are no different, even in appearance, from Mr. Pilkington. In the Halas-Batchelor film, however, it is not human exploiters who attend Napoleon's orgy, but other pig-bureaucrats from pig satrapies elsewhere. They all get drunk, the animals of the world unite in revolt and converge on Animal Farm, Napoleon whistles to his dogs for help, but they too are sodden in liquor and unable to prevent the overthrow of the tyrant. 'Tis the final conflict—a truly Trotskyite touch, but notably out of keeping with Orwell's melancholy view of world politics.

Another detail that might be objected to is the excessive prettying up of the animals' toil. When they are getting in the harvest and when Boxer prances as he pulls stone for the windmill, one almost expects the Seven Dwarfs to pop round the barn, singing "Hi-Ho" and pitching in with right good will. The temptation to Disneyize must have been irresistible, but Disney is not Orwell.

Yet with these and other flaws the film has not seriously damaged Orwell and may have the merit of bringing his satire to those who do not know the novel. In the promotion of the film, however, and in the response of the critics, something happened that is worthy of note.

WHAT, according to critics and advertisers, is Orwell's anti-Communist classic *Animal Farm?*

It is, says Bosley Crowther in the New York *Times*, "a pretty brutal demonstration of the vicious cycle of tyranny"; it presents "the leaders of the new Power State as pigs" and conveys "a sense of the monstrous hypocrisy of the totalitarian leader type." In a lengthy review, Mr. Crowther never comes closer than this to mentioning Russia.

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It is, says Otis L. Guernsey, Jr., in the *Herald Tribune*, "a political parable satirizing the various isms in a story about animals taking over a farm and founding their own society. . . . It tells how an animals' revolution is converted into a pigs' Fascism with the passage of time and the corruption of democratic ideals."

"The main point about *Animal Farm*," says Archer Winsten in the New York *Post*, "is that it has something to say about dictatorships, democracy, and the conflicts between those who toil and those who rule. It says this without pulling punches." It is "intelligence week" at the Paris Theater, says Mr. Winsten, providing "egghead ecstasy." For the program also includes an old March of Time on Huey Long and is "of extraordinary, inter-related quality."

JOHN MCCARTEN, of the *New Yorker*: "Orwell's allegory, you remember, recounts the story of a revolution in barnyard terms and dwells on the subsequent disillusionment it causes its makers, with pigs playing the roles of the totalitarian leaders who take over when a power vacuum occurs. . . . The picture has the merit of discussing an important theme in terms that are clear, direct, and easily understood."

Arthur Knight, in the *Saturday Review*: "Orwell intended *Animal Farm* as a grim parable on the rise of the modern totalitarian state. . . . The whole point of his book was that the parallels be apparent, its characters and types be recognized. . . . But the entire film gives a sense of being too closely tied to its source—while lacking the urbane and keen cutting edge of Orwell's prose." But Mr. Knight does not suggest what the parallels are, nor does he mention Russia.

Even in the *Daily News*, where one might expect something else, Wanda Hale writes, truly but vaguely: "Like Orwell's fable, the film is a vitriolic satire on dictatorship, uncomfortably realistic in the comparison of man to the lower form of animal and a frightening example of the oppressed masses under tyrannical rulers drunk with power." She does not mention Russia.

In the *Herald Tribune's* advance story on the making of the film, we learn that "In *Animal Farm* Orwell was satirizing the Dictator State in terms of Animals vs. Man. . . . The parable follows close to the history of twentieth-century totalitarianism."

As late as January 16, Mr. Crowther wrote in the Sunday *Times*: "These two highly facile young artists have converted the Orwell parody of a totalitarian political system into a clever and sardonic cartoon that is touched with bits of tearful pathos and barbed with trenchant points of caricature. . . ."

Still no word about Russia.

THE promotion of the film had been in the same general vein. In a publicity handout before the opening, Irving Drutman, of Louis de Rochemont Associates, says: "Orwell's world-renowned satirical fable, which lampoons the modern Power State, deals with the revolt against the tyrannical Farmer Brown [*sic*]. . . . The parable ironically parallels the history of the 20th century."

Another kind of promotion of the film is Roger Manvell's book *The Animated Film* (Sylvan Press, 1954), which deals with the technical problems of making *Animal Farm*. In such a book one does not expect political discussion, but Mr. Manvell goes out of his way to show how Orwell's novel presents special difficulties. In his introduction he calls it a "memorable fable" and a "serious political satire." Later he says, "George Orwell's fable is symbolic, like Swift's story in which Lemuel Gulliver travels to the land of the Horses, and the result is a political satire full of deep feeling. The animals on an ill-kept farm revolt against its cruel and drunken owner, drive him out by means of an organized revolution, and set up their own form of democratic community, led by the pigs, who prove to be the most intelligent of the animals. But although they begin with a democracy, it gradually develops into a dictatorship in which the pigs are the herrenvolk, and Napoleon, the most powerful and evil of the pigs, is the dictator." The word *Herrenvolk*, unless Dr. Manvell is just

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showing off his German, can mean only the Nazis.*

In the pictorial advertising, still other intimations appeared. The placards outside the Paris Theater tell us that the film is the story of the pig Napoleon. "Is he someone you know? Someone you've read about? Seen him before? Do you recognize him?" The pictures accompanying these questions (and similar pictures appearing in newspaper advertising), though piglike enough, are also reminiscent. One pig wearing a string-tie is a caricature of a Southern Senator. Another resembles the late Hermann Goering; but this is almost inevitable—just as all babies are said to resemble Sir Winston Churchill, so all pigs resemble either Goering or Georgi Malenkov.

A third picture of a pig, which appeared in the most prominent spot in the early newspaper advertising for the film, undeniably suggests Senator McCarthy; this is another natural—the artist can hardly be blamed for the appearance of the pigs. Still, do pigs normally look as if they suffered from five-o'clock shadow?

Also, pigs do not have bushy eyebrows. And in a new edition of *Animal Farm,* which Harcourt, Brace has brought out with drawings from the film and others which Mr. Halas and Miss Batchelor have added to illustrate passages not translated to the screen, there appears (p. 80) a drawing of Napoleon with the telltale bushy eyebrows and scowl of the same Senator McCarthy. (To give the Halases due credit, the last pig in the book does have a Stalinist mustache, but he *looks* like J. P. Morgan.)

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*Let's try our hand at this kind of reading of *Animal Farm.* Despite a certain freedom with facts, and despite a more lenient judgment of the character of Hitler than I feel historians will ultimately concede, I think my reinterpretation of *Animal Farm* should prove acceptable to the critics of the *Times,* the *Herald Tribune,* and the *Post,* and to the de Rochemont Associates and Dr. Manvell:

Under the Weimar Tyranny of autocratic, corrupt Wilhelm II, the old socialist philosopher Richard Wagner, now dying, made his last speech to a congress of workers and peasants, predicting the revolution in the distant future and exhorting his followers to be true to their ideals of freedom and equality and justice to minorities after their victory. After Wagner's death, the revolution came unexpectedly soon, the Weimar Tyranny crumbling from sheer incompetence. When Wilhelm fled, his power was seized by Adolf Hitler, scholar, theoretician, and orator, and Hermann Goering, "not much of a talker, but with a reputation for getting his own way." These at once set up a socialist state whose egalitarian and pacifist principles, foreshadowed in the writings of Wagner and codified by Hitler, became the envy and admiration of all downtrodden peoples. In the midst of its struggles with the task of mechanizing the primitive German economy, the new state was attacked by Wilhelm, who had raised a motley army in France and England. But the intervention was quickly defeated: Hitler personally led the charge in the victorious battle and emerged as the great national hero.

In illiterate Germany, only a small minority, the Nazis, had any technical skill, and their party, willingly granted leadership by all democratic forces, was split into the Hitler and Goering factions. Hitler spoke for rapid industrialization, though conceding that its immediate privations would be heavy. Goering, more adept and more unscrupulous, ridiculed industrialization, succeeded in forcibly driving Hitler into exile, and through control of the Nazis and the secret police seized absolute power for himself. Immediately he undertook a large-scale rewriting of history to prove that Hitler had never been a hero and had, in fact, been a spy in the employ of Wilhelm.

In one of his frequent changes of line, Goering proceeded to industrialize Germany, not without back-breaking labor on the part of the bewildered peasants, as well as incompetent engineering that almost caused total failure. At last the great hydroelectric plant on the Elbe was finished. Meanwhile Goering ruled by terror, with spy purges (the spies always confessed they were in league with the exiled Hitler) and famine for the peasants and increased privileges for the Nazis.

After a long period of isolation, trade had been resumed with decadent, capitalist England and totalitarian France. In fact, Goering played these mutual enemies off against each other, cleverly executing 180-degree turns in propaganda in order to gain a temporary advantage from one or the other. Finally, however, he was swindled in an alliance with France. For the French hordes invaded Germany, laid waste much of the country, and blew up the great Elbe Dam. They were driven out only at incalculable human cost. Goering, his regime now secure and his vices approximating those of the depraved Wilhelm, gave a tremendous banquet for the English ministers at which each ruling clique swore undying friendship with the other but immediately began to plot new treachery. Goering's subjects, sunk in misery, had almost forgotten the glorious socialist revolution which was to have brought them freedom, plenty, and equality.

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ALL this is embarrassing to me, since as a teacher I have for some years been recommending *Animal Farm* to my students. Frequently one of them reports in class on the novel, usually with enthusiasm, for the story of the animals who in their inept innocence try to solve problems that the human race has failed to solve is both humorously and deeply pathetic. All the students except those completely ignorant of modern history recognize that the story parallels the Russian Revolution. Without assistance they identify Napoleon as Stalin, Jones as the Czar, and Frederick as Hitler; if they have ever heard of Trotsky, they recognize him at once as Snowball. Other niceties of Orwell's satire, such as the changes of line, the ban on singing the "Internationale," the rewritings of history, are spotted only by the sophisticated. In all these years, no student has yet come up with the notion that the fable is about either the Nazis or Senator McCarthy (of whom they *have* heard).

Fortunately, if any of my students should ever reproach me for having misled them on the meaning of *Animal Farm,* there will be one or two authorities to whom I can appeal. Delmore Schwartz, in the *New Republic,* does say quite clearly that *Animal Farm* is about Russia, though he thinks the film frequently clumsy and generally unsatisfactory. *Time's* reviewer, too, had by January 17 either heard what was happening or figured the thing out for himself, for he discusses "George Orwell's political fable, the famous animallegory about Communism." Rose Pelswick, in the *Journal-American* of December 30, begins her review with: "Based on the powerful anti-Communist fable of George Orwell, the picture is an interesting adaptation. . . ." And Alton Cook, in the *World-Telegram and Sun,* says: "If you were attentive to your homework on the book pages back in 1946, you will recall that the novel was a biting satire on the rise of the Communist dictatorship. Animals revolted against their farmer owner and events paralleled the course of the Russian Revolution." Mr. Cook concludes: "The Communists never had it so rough."

It is interesting that three out of these four reviews appeared in "right-wing" publications. Has truth become a luxury no longer available to liberals?

It is interesting also that in the newspaper advertising for the first ten days of the film's run, there were quotations from Crowther, Guernsey, Hale, and Winsten, but not from Pelswick or Cook.

A middle course was taken when it came to Louis Berg, of *This Week.* Back in August 1953, Mr. Berg wrote a piece on *Animal Farm.* It was illustrated with drawings from the film-in-progress, including a marvelous sketch (unfortunately omitted from the finished film) of the Politburo Pigs on the reviewing stand watching their animal slaves march past. Mr. Berg called *Animal Farm* a "devastating satire on Russian Communism," and commended the forthcoming film as a faithful adaptation of the book. Mr. Berg's piece was called "The Fable That Rocked the Kremlin." But the early ads for the film, for example in the *Times* for December 31, read: "'A devastating satire—an important film!' (Berg, *This Week* Magazine)."

AS A matter of fact, the publication and advertising history of the novel *Animal Farm* in this country might have prepared us for the kind of promotion by selective quotation that has been given to the film.

Before its acceptance by Harcourt, Brace and Company, *Animal Farm* was turned down by eighteen or twenty American publishers—notable among them Little, Brown and Company, whose then editor, Angus Cameron, wielded his hatchet on many an anti-Communist book while pushing Howard Fast and Albert E. Kahn. (Equally notable, perhaps, is the publisher who turned it down because "there's no market for animal stories.") When Harcourt, Brace at last published the book, the advertising material on the dust-jacket did not mention Russia or Communism, but proclaimed, instead: "About this little book there is the same kind of reality one concedes to *Alice in Wonderland.*" The author of that sentence is like

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Homer in one way—in being unable to read.

Of course, one might say, that was in 1946 when we were still in the afterglow of the wartime alliance with Russia and there might still have been a Communist under a bed here and there. However, as it happened, even at that time some of the literary critics were not so nervous as the publishers. *Animal Farm* was a Book of the Month Club selection in August 1946. Harry Scherman, president of the Club, made an almost unprecedented appeal to members not to make use of their substitution privilege that month, and commended to their attention the review by Christopher Morley in the same issue of the Club's *News*. Mr. Morley's review begins: "In a narrative so plain that a child will enjoy it, yet with double meanings as cruel and comic as any great cartoon, George Orwell presents a parable that may rank as one of the great political satires of our anxious time. . . . It is plain enough that the satire is explicitly turned on Russian Communism, yet I also wish that the reader might see in it a parable even larger than that."

The point was made more fully by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., who in the *Times* book section for August 25, 1946, concluded his acute and admiring review thus: "Appreciation of the precision and bite of the satire increases with knowledge of the events in Russia. The steadiness and lucidity of Orwell's merciless wit are reminiscent of Anatole France and even of Swift. The exact and deadpan transposition of the struggle between Stalin and Trotsky, the fight over industrialization, the Moscow trials, the diplomatic shenanigans with Britain and Germany, the NKVD, the resurrection of the state church, and so on, will be a continuing delight to anyone familiar with recent Soviet developments. The story should be read in particular by liberals who still cannot understand how Soviet performance has fallen so far behind Communist professions. *Animal Farm* is a wise, compassionate and illuminating fable for our times."

Now it is 1955, when all America has had the disillusioning lessons of ten years of postwar experience with the Soviet rulers, and when domestic Communist influence, we understand, no longer exists. So how account for the fact that, when Harcourt, Brace now decides to reissue *Animal Farm* to accompany the film, Mr. Morley and Mr. Schlesinger are quoted on the dust-jacket in curiously adapted versions? On the front cover is the quotation from Christopher Morley: "A parable that may rank as one of the great political satires of our anxious time." Inside the cover is a long quotation from Mr. Scherman, fortunately innocuous but demonstrating that space was not lacking, and the same quotation from Mr. Morley. Then this from Mr. Schlesinger: "A wise, compassionate and illuminating fable for our times. . . . The steadiness and lucidity of Orwell's merciless wit are reminiscent of Anatole France and even of Swift."

This, too, has some of the "reality one concedes to *Alice in Wonderland*."

Am I only trying to stir up a tempest in a samovar? After all, you may ask, what's the harm if the critics see *Animal Farm* as a "universal" satire on all tyrannies everywhere? Anyway, isn't it obvious that the satire applies to Russia? Why labor the obvious?

Well, it is not, as it happens, a "universal" satire. No doubt *Animal Farm* has "universal" implications. So does Swift's *A Modest Proposal*. But *A Modest Proposal* is about British oppression of the Irish peasantry, and *Animal Farm* is about the Bolshevik betrayal of the people of Russia. Do we add to our sense of the "universal" by omitting these facts? If so, then perhaps we might enrich our sense of American history by forgetting the issues involved in the Civil War, omitting the names of Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis, and remembering only that the war was an example of the eternal aggressiveness of the human spirit.

Can the parable of *Animal Farm* be applied equally to all forms of totalitarianism? My "reinterpretation" of this fable as it would apply to Nazi Germany should, I

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think, stand as a sufficient answer. Those who unmention Russia are asking us to believe that so sophisticated an anti-Communist as George Orwell wrote a book in which *by mere accident* every event and every character can be shown to correspond *exactly* to some fact, general or particular, of Soviet history. Moreover, it is clear that the demagogy in *Animal Farm* can only be the demagogy of a dictatorship whose origin was egalitarian and pacifist socialism: *Comrade* Napoleon—when was it ever *Comrade* Hitler or *Comrade* Mussolini? The Nazis and Fascists specifically condemned equality and socialism and denounced democracy as corrupt. Only the Communists claimed to be more democratic than anyone else; only to the Communists could one satirically attribute such a slogan as "All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others."

As for laboring the obvious: in reviewing a film about Sister Kenny, for example, would critics avoid using the word "polio"? Would they refer instead to "a controversial disease"? Would they find "a clear and unmistakable reference to a scientific problem of interest to every patient and doctor"? Would they commend the film, in spite of defects, as "having something to say about medicine, suffering, and therapy"? Would they fail to mention Sister Kenny by name, and make only elliptical references that might apply as well to Koch or Pasteur? Or, politically speaking, when Chaplin made *The Great Dictator,* did these critics fail to indicate, by outright statement and unambiguous leer, that the butt of Chaplin's satire was Hitler?

Perhaps it is worth mentioning that the Communists themselves seem to know very well what the book is about. Mr. David Platt, in the Sunday *Worker* of January 9, writes: "This list would not be complete without a mention of Louis de Rochemont's feature-length cartoon based on George Orwell's anti-human novel 'Animal Farm' which was intended to frighten people out of any belief in the possibility of social progress. The point of the cartoon was that the overthrow of capitalism can bring only ruin to the world, that a society based on the people's rule carries within it the seeds of its eventual destruction." Mr. Platt, obviously, is not a liberal, and he has given the game away: *Animal Farm* is an attack on Russian Communism.

THIS, however, is not quite the end of our story of the liberal mind's visit to *Animal Farm.* About two weeks after the picture opened, a change took place, not suddenly but yet with fair rapidity. On January 7, there appeared in the ads a quotation from Mr. Cook (but an innocuous one); and Mr. Berg's phrase, "The Fable That Rocked the Kremlin," not only appeared but headed the list of endorsements. And there are other signs that from now on the film will be presented and advertised for what it is—a fable about Russian Communism. On January 16, the ad for the film in the Sunday *Times* was a reprint from the review in *Time.* Apparently someone has discovered that the fable isn't really so "universal" after all.

How was that discovery made? And why did it take so long to make it?* Why do people spend three years of painstaking labor on an anti-Communist film only to deny, when the job is finished, that it *is* anti-Communist? I have no answers to these questions. Advertising is a mysterious business, and liberalism these days seems to be a mysterious business too; when you put the two mysteries together, you get something like the kind of story I have been telling. Perhaps Mr. Crowther, Mr. Guernsey, Mr. Winsten, et al., and Mr. de Rochemont and his associates, might help to clarify what happened and why.

I think the whole story would tickle George Orwell's satiric sense, though no doubt it would also depress him to see how long some people have taken to learn so little.

*The Paris Theater has been asked to show, along with *Animal Farm,* the newsreel of the Russian Politburo people at the last December 13 celebration, in which the round-faced, solid-fleshed Soviet leaders looked a good deal like—guess what? Huey Long marches on, but still no Politburo.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

THE WORLD OF STATION WEVD

Erev Shabbos in Yiddish-American Culture

RUTH GLAZER

I AM hoping one day to confound the Hooper people when they call me by telling them that I'm listening to WEVD. Of course, this will only be so if it is Friday. Friday and WEVD somehow belong together, for reasons that have nothing to do with radio and a great deal to do with housekeeping.

I was brought up to understand that there was only one way to keep a house: namely to take it apart, clean it piece by piece, and then put it together again. It was only in my later years that I discovered, with some surprise, the American, or scientific, way of keeping house: Monday, vacuuming; Tuesday, washing; Wednesday, ironing; Thursday, scrubbing. And Friday? . . . Indeed, what of Fridays? This is the point at which I stick. On Fridays I find myself thrust by some atavistic instinct back to the way a *baalebosta* keeps house. I tear it all apart and begin cleaning it piece by piece.

What a world of difference between a *baalebosta* and a housewife, that limp, passive creature droning through some scientific schedule. One might say "just a housewife," but never "merely a *baalebosta*." Her household is her kingdom; the pride she takes in the gleam of her faucets, in the cleanliness of her windows, in the polish of her furniture, in the good smell of good baking and cooking shows itself in her bearing. But to accomplish all this she needs rather stronger spiritual support than her slenderer sister. Hence, WEVD. And on Fridays, when things reach a crescendo with a real *baalebosta*, we have a correspondingly heightened mood on WEVD.

On Fridays, therefore, I listen to WEVD. I'm not sure whether what I like best is the programs or the commercials (although it takes an expert to distinguish them). Or maybe it is the atmosphere that binds us all together—one great working force being exhorted, urged, preached at, denounced, and, very occasionally, entertained as we move through the day, from the earliest and darkest stages—the stove dismantled and soaking in the kitchen sink, the beds stripped, the curtains down—to the last touches of late afternoon—polishing the candlesticks, skimming the fat off the now cool chicken soup, plumping up the sofa pillows (the *baalebosta* doesn't care for foam rubber), and filling the fruit bowl in the living room.

WE MIGHT, perhaps, begin with the musical entertainment, and with WEVD's chief vocal star, Seymour Rechzeit, who appears on at least two programs daily, once as "The Melody Box" and once as "The Jewish Folk Singer." Rechzeit has the kind of light, slightly nasal tenor voice that ladies of a certain age find irresistible. It quivers, it trembles, it vibrates. In point of fact, it

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TURN the dial to 1330 (AM) or 97.9 (FM), and you are in the world of radio station WEVD, where you may hear Yiddish crooners singing *"Tsumisht, Tsutumult, un Farkisheft,"* rabbis preaching the good Jewish life, dramatic vignettes of Jewish problems, troubles, and joys, and recipes for the serious Jewish housewife. WEVD goes on all week, but, RUTH GLAZER tells us, its Friday afternoons have a flavor all their own. Mrs. Glazer has served COMMENTARY for years as an occasional commentator on Jewish manners, morals, and cooking.

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bleats. While his taste is hardly irreproachable—he has been known to attempt patriotic anthems à la George Jessel, and he grows very maudlin at times—his position as a kind of Yiddish Liberace has been unchallenged for the past fifteen years. Rechzeit's great specialty, although not unique with him, is his trick of singing popular American songs in Yiddish, using recordings by famous orchestras as accompaniment. By now he has built up a considerable repertoire in this art form, including: "Oh What a Beautiful Morning," "Black Magic," "Night and Day," "Bewitched, Bothered, and Bewildered" (that goes particularly nicely into Yiddish as *"Tsumisht, Tsutumult, un Farkisheft"*) and "Three Coins in the Fountain." Just the other day I caught a husky-voiced young lady singing to an unmistakably familiar tune, *"Veil ich hob lieb mein yingele un shoin."* This was a rendering easily recognizable from the music as "Can't Help Loving That Man of Mine."

Unfortunately, however, Yiddish is not the language of romantic love, so that in attempting to follow the plot line of hit tunes, Rechzeit finds himself singing complicated, high-flown philosophic essays. Occasionally he just gives it all up and sings the refrain in English. One language collaboration that did come off with spectacular success was "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot." The words to the chorus are:

Trugt mich, trugt mich, m'lochim,
In Gan Eden firt mich arein.
("Carry me, carry me, angels,
Into the Garden of Eden lead me on.")

One of the most famous names to appear regularly is Abe Ellstein, a composer for the Yiddish theater, who conducts, with delicate irony, a program of "New Talent." On one memorable program—not on a Friday as it happens—two candidates appeared. One, a young, and, if we believe Ellstein, beautiful girl trotted out that tired old war horse of Yiddish vaudeville, "Eli Eli." Who can say how she sang it? Is it not enough that she chose it? The second candidate was a sixty-eight-year-old salesman of commercial refrigeration who had arrived in this country in 1906. In the banter exchanged before his offering, the old man referred to the fact that he had studied singing *"noch in die haim,"* a phrase I never fail to find touching. He also confessed himself to be a devotee of sports of all kinds including ice-skating—a confession which was not accorded the standing ovation it probably would have received on a network "Wake Up and Live" kind of program. His song was introduced somewhat quizzically by Ellstein, more or less as follows: "We will now hear how an old Jew who slides around on the ice sings 'O Sole Mio' in Russian." And a rather remarkable performance it was.

THERE are also any number of programs of recorded music of Jewish folk songs, Israeli songs, Jewish dance music, and orchestral music. In view of the vast quantity of sentimental trash, smutty and otherwise, that floods the current Yiddish stage and record market, WEVD maintains a remarkably high-toned and even high-minded atmosphere. This is perhaps best demonstrated by a commercial read over the air for a Yiddish play called *Two Mamas.* One of the selling points was that it was the sort of play that one could bring children to; that, in fact, it dealt with the dilemma first wrestled with by Solomon (and rather recently, I believe, by MGM) concerning which mother was the truer—she who had borne the child, or she who had raised it.

There is a stylistic integrity to the songs sung by Isa Kramer, Victor Chenken, Noah Nachbush, and Mark Olf (to name but a few of the excellent singers whose recordings are played over WEVD) that has practically vanished from Yiddish entertainment. Their songs are, I would guess, of turn-of-the-century, pre-World War I vintage. Some have almost achieved the status of folk music. Others were just simple popular songs to begin with and have not grown very much in anyone's esteem since they were written. Their chief appeal today is in the pleasant nostalgic reverberations they evoke. (The kind of song I'm talking about might be compared with "Take Me Out to the Ball Game.") Unhappily Yiddish is such a violent language that a singer's emotional range is considerably more extravagant than it would be in English. And within this framework it is only to be expected that as he describes Rabbi Elimelech in his cups, Chenken will blubber, that Nachbush will reach heights of manic happiness in a celebration of Purim, and that Isa Kramer will sob her

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way through the last verse of a song about an old maid trying to get married.

It is when these old, popular songs are "rediscovered" that the trouble really begins, and all sense of proportion gets swept away. Instead of getting a song sung with a break in the voice delicately interpolated into the last stanza, we now have the same song sobbed from beginning to end through a rain of tears. One of the songs most frequently sinned against in this way is *"Oif'n Pripetchik,"* a song in which a ghetto child learning his letters is reminded of the hard life that he has been born into as a Jew in exile and is urged to take comfort from the reading of his Bible. It has a sweet little refrain imitating the child chanting his letters, *"Kametz-alef, O, kametz-bes, bo,"* which for some reason has American Jewish singers hypnotized. *"Oif'n Pripetchik"* is generally presented with heavy meaningfulness as an apotheosis of both Jewish thought and educational technique. And since Anglo-Jewish singers are even worse historians than they are artists, they make peculiar mistakes in their indiscriminate sentimentalization over the past. Polemical songs especially have a way of outliving their original purpose. One of these is a song written to mock the slavishness of the great courts of followers around the Hasidic rabbis. In this song, the followers are depicted as not only imitating everything their rabbi does, but also, in their enthusiasm, going him one better. If he walks, they jump. If he eats, they gobble. If he is silent, they are doubly so. If he sleeps, they snore, and, finally, if he swims, they drown themselves. I have heard this song piously introduced as portraying the touching devotion of the Hasidim to their rabbis.

EVEN worse than the interpreters are the Anglo-Jewish composers and arrangers. It is a tribute to WEVD that very little of this sort of music is played for its listeners. Occasionally we do hear the mawkish ballads, sung almost exclusively by American-born Jews as deliberate tear-jerkers. One, which I heard over WEVD, is called *"Ich Benk Ahaim"* ("I Long for Home"). Now, as we saw in the quotation from our refrigerator salesman, "home" to the first generation always means the old country, the particular village or city from which they came. This sentiment used to be exploited cheerfully enough in the song *"Mein Shtetele Belz"* which even invaded the juke-box circuit for a while. But *"Ich Benk Ahaim"* isn't cheerful. It sets out to capture its audience by pinioning it with its own very simple-hearted memories. "I Long for Home," moans the fresh-faced girl, "I long for my childhood years." This, to an organ accompaniment evoking a cantorial melody, is almost more than mortal flesh can endure. But we can hope it will not have any permanent future. As soon as American Jews have recovered some balance following their present headlong rush into "things Jewish," they cannot fail to reject these songs.

Much harder to eradicate will be the products with intellectual pretensions, like an ugly work I heard twice in two weeks over WEVD called "What Is Torah?" done in a Norman Corwin-Ballad-for-Americans style. "What is Torah?" a voice asks. "It is," replies the narrator against a musical background, "a small room, a boy singing" [the boy is singing the refrain from *"Oifn Pripetchik"*], the land, mother earth, the triumphant song of exiles." "What is Torah?" persists the voice. "It is," replies the narrator, "Theodor Herzl, the Zionist Congress, Industry, *Halutziut*." "What is Torah?" asks the voice again. "It is Israel's gift to humanity, it is F.D.R. saying 'All men are equal in the sight of God' [to the musical accompaniment of "America the Beautiful"], it is an ethical ideal." I submit that this is senseless humbug, in a style that has held ad writers in some kind of vise since Carl Sandburg unwisely wrote "The People Yes." Only the other day my eye was caught by a glossy bit of advertising in which we were asked "What is North Carolina?" We were then answered, this time in words and pictures—it is its rivers and harbors, a small boy going to school down a sunlit road, etc., etc. This kind of logic of definition would lead us by the construction of a very simple syllogism to the inescapable conclusion that Torah is North Carolina.

ALL of this is fitted into the interstices of the main structure of the programming. On Fridays the rabbis, the orphans, the needy yeshiva students, the poor relatives in Israel, the aged, the blind, the sick, the halt, the lame, but not the heathen, all of these or their representatives appear at the micro-

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phones of WEVD. On the one hand there are the appeals for outright gifts to the yeshivas, old age homes, and other institutions. On the other hand, there are programs which sound like appeals for charity, but are actually appeals for business from food and appliance companies exporting to Israel.

One such program consisted of an interview with Mr. So-and-So who also happened to own an appliance export business on the East Side. Mr. So-and-So had just returned from Israel and this was his first appearance before the microphones since his return.

ANNOUNCER: Mr. So-and-So, how would you describe your impression of conditions in Israel as you found them?

MR. SO-AND-SO: Mr. Announcer, I am, naturally, very glad to give WEVD listeners the benefit of my fresh impressions, since, as you know, I have just returned. As you can well imagine, the spirit of our brethren in Israel is splendid. Their lot is hard and bitter, but they never falter. Despite the many daily difficulties that stand in the way of their accomplishing the great tasks which are set before them, and which must and shall be accomplished with the help of God, they never slacken in their perseverance and one can only admire their courage and strength of heart.

ANNOUNCER: Thank you for your fascinating personal report on life in Israel today, Mr. So-and-So. And now, dear and honored radio listeners, if you want to send a refrigerator to your loved ones in Israel do not fail to go immediately to the store of Mr. So-and-So, where he will be happy personally to help you select the right refrigerator for your beloved relatives in Israel.

Another program features a wailing-voiced woman who intones a fluent and colorless Yiddish with a marked American accent. She sells food certificates for Israel by telling lugubrious traditional tales illuminating rather doubtfully the spiritual benefits of charity. Her speech is full of pious mouthings, assuring her listeners of eternal blessing if they take pity on their relatives who, while enjoying all the spiritual benefits of life in Israel, still require the physical sustenance of gift certificates bought from her sponsor.

HAVING shaken loose from her, we are ready to take on the rabbis, both the weepers and the shouters. The weepers, appeal. The shouters, demand. Among the former we find the appeal for a home for ancient sages whose representative with tears in his voice describes the abandoned fate of these men who are dependent on charity, but whose prayers, by virtue of their great learning and piety, yet have extraordinary power. For a very nominal *quid pro quo,* prayers will be said in whatever name is stipulated by the donor.* Another—this time a rabbi representing a yeshiva in the Bronx—describes the great need for the young students to have a one-week vacation during the summer and lyrically portrays how they would spend their time at camp not idly playing ball, but rather gaining strength through the fresh air to carry on their studies "on green grass in the shade of trees." Each of these appeals is concluded with a listing of names of those who have responded to earlier appeals, accompanied by salutes such as: "Congratulations on the engagement of your daughter. You see you had no need to fear"; or, "Many thanks, Mr. Rosenfeld, and our prayers for the complete recovery of your dear wife"; or "Best wishes on the birth of your grandchild."

The shouters begin by a vigorous attack on their audience, and on Friday, in particular, we listeners take a great deal of abuse for not being sufficiently diligent in observing the Sabbath, for not urging our friends, neighbors, and tradesmen to observe, and occasionally we are reminded how a dereliction in this particular duty lays at our door the possible break-up of our homes. Most of these exhortations conclude with a curt: "Candle blessing tonight: 6:35." It will happen, sometimes, that a rival will say 6:36 or even 6:34, an act of mischievous carelessness very upsetting to the punctilious *baalebosta.*

We are used to being upbraided about our inadequate observance of the Sabbath. Occasionally someone—although there are not many who dare—will upbraid us about our observances of *kashrut.* This, for complicated reasons, is always a sore point with

*Listeners are also reminded of the value of these prayers should they be preparing to undertake a journey or enter into new business ventures.

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the *baalebosta,* and a man had best be on firm ground lest he arouse his listeners' hostility. But no corner of modern life has escaped the acute observation of our radio rabbis, as the following incident attests. During the fight which had been raging in the Jewish community over kosher *vs.* non-kosher kitchens in its hospitals, one man argued that when a Jewish woman goes to a hospital to have a child and then thoughtlessly eats non-kosher food, not only is she committing a sin herself, but, if she nurses the child, she is at the same time polluting an innocent babe. Therefore Jewish women were urged to understand what they were doing, and when choosing their hospital to make certain they would be assured of kosher food. I have, since, often meditated on the bloody wrangles between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law that must inevitably have followed this piece of news.

THE most vigorous lecturer I have yet heard is a rabbi who is a representative of a movement that he calls *Anti-Shmad* ("Anti-Conversion"). One Friday, shortly after Mother's Day, he took as his theme the contrast between mothers of former times and the mothers of today, and devoted his sermon to the story of a poor widow who lived in the Russian Pale with an only child, a son of seven years. She lives in fear that her son will be snatched by kidnappers who will enroll him in the Czar's service for twenty-five years and force him to renounce his religion. Then, one day, she sees the Czar's agents enter her town for their annual recruitment. She hits on the desperate scheme of faking the death of her son by laying him out, covering him with a black cloth, lighting black candles, etc. But the agents are not so easily taken in by these mournful trappings, and lift the cloth to see if the child is breathing. Then they stick hot needles into the soles of his feet. Yankele does not stir. The agents depart satisfied and the mother discovers that Yankele is indeed dead. The style in which the narrator developed his theme was spine-chilling to anyone used to the cadences of English or American oratory. As he told the story, his voice would soar up to the emotional climaxes, until finally, unable to be contained within the bounds of even heightened speech, it would break into the chant of the *magid.* Then, at the very climax of the episode, he would break off and begin the next episode in the spoken inflection. Slowly the tension would mount, and again the voice would break into the traditional melodic chant of the preachers. That it was both melodic and chanted does not mean that it was soft, but rather that it burned with a power that speech could not have. His moral, which came almost as the epilogue, was as ferocious as it was brief. "Better," said he, "that there should be a dead Jew lying in a cemetery than a living Jew converted."

It is this fierce certainty that is characteristic of the programs produced by the Orthodox groups. Another Orthodox program, sponsored by a parochial school, began with the reading of a letter from a listener who wrote that he has a son, raised with great care and indulgence, who is now attending college. Despite his many advantages, he behaves in a way that distresses his father; he is moody, restless, and generally dissatisfied. The father asks for help, or an explanation.

The answer is simple. The son is unhappy because he does not have the true quietude of spirit that rests upon those who study the Holy Word, like the students who attend the parochial school for which the honored doctor is now about to plead for funds.

Another positive personage, though less simple in his certainty, is the "Jewish Philosopher," a five-day-a-week feature of WEVD. The Philosopher is a reader and answerer of advice-seeking letters. He begins his programs with the tolling of a bell, three times, and a portentous, "God help you, my beloved friends." He reads his letters in a rich dramatic style, and often not without an audible tear. His problems are all the great classic and not-so-classic circumstantial problems that can be found in a large Jewish community: children *vs.* parents, man *vs.* wife, man *vs.* conscience. The Philosopher never fails to take sides in these matters and soundly berate at least one of the parties to the dispute before offering his advice. Unfortunately, there are cases whose solutions elude even the Jewish Philosopher and he will recommend that his honored correspondent take himself off to a psychiatrist. This is the kind of advice that is naturally very disappointing to the listener, because the struc-

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ture of the questions and answers, in general, has the pattern of a suspense story where the answer gives the resolution: yes, the wife will leave the husband, the young lovers may marry, etc. But if the inquirer is sent off to a psychiatrist, who knows what can happen, and how many long years off? The resolution passes beyond the view of the listener. Most unsatisfying.

About dramatic programs, I shall have to prove a poor reporter. Recently I have not been able to work up the passion in the serials that I once felt for the Sunday series on Christopher Columbus, which I followed with bated breath, episode by episode, for some two years. The peculiarly fascinating thing about this serial was the distinct impression carried away by at least this listener that Christopher Columbus was really a Jew and Isabella his confidante and supporter in contrast to her worthless and anti-Semitic husband. The serials today, both daily and Sunday, are of the hair-pulling, shriek-and-moan variety, dealing with wayward daughters and errant sons, whose deeds we are left to mourn over in the company of an all too voluble assortment of relatives and hangers-on.

One of the best features of WEVD programming is its news and news commentary. The news is summarized straight at frequent intervals during the day and the interests of the commentators are by no means parochial. The news is another area where the high-mindedness of WEVD shows itself. There are no reports of murders, rapes, burglaries, or of crime in general. This information is confined to the women's programs as a feature. And I have yet, even at the height of the season, to hear a single baseball score offered over the station. For the WEVD listener, the Yankees, the Dodgers, the Rose Bowl, the four-minute mile are all strange figments of the imagination of the younger generation.

My favorite program on WEVD is a fifteen-minute program of readings from Sholom Aleichem heard five times a week. Ben Basenko has the gift of seeming not to read, but rather to be actually telling the story extemporaneously, a great virtue with Sholom Aleichem, so that we proceed, imperceptibly making progress, day by day. With a cluck, a wheeze, a smack of the lips, a pause, and a sigh, Basenko brings to life the whole incredible gallery. On one program, when he decided (for perfectly ingenuous reasons, I'm sure) to play a recording of Howard Da Silva reading Sholom Aleichem in English translation, his efforts only resulted in exposing the impoverishment of the sentimentalized American style. Basenko's own style brings us Sholom Aleichem with all the hardness and individuality that these portraits of ghetto life require.

WEVD probably has the most talented and versatile staff of announcers in all radio. Not only do the announcers announce; they are also program-makers, actors, commentators, script writers, interviewers, and even interviewees. Each of them also has a vividly distinct style of delivery as well as a favored area of specialization. Ben Basenko, who has an easy rolling voice (he would probably be a sensation as the relaxed cigarette smoker in a television commercial), seems to specialize in what we might call the secular programming. In addition to the Sholom Aleichem, he does a program called "Forward from Day to Day," which seems to be extemporaneous readings from the daily *Forward*. There is a nice comfortable sound to the way he reads: the rustle of the large pages, the pause as he glances over a new page and finally decides where to read from it. He is also in demand for the lengthier commercials, and, although he is not as actively involved with the religious programs as another announcer, Zvi Scooler, he does them up very handsomely when he gets the chance. "Amen, Selah," he will say as he steps to the microphone at the conclusion of a rabbi's sermon.

Zvi Scooler has been famous for years as the *Grammeister* ("Rhyme Master") of the "Forward Hour." In this capacity he delivers an editorial on the news, drawing heavily on religious and Biblical allusions. As his title indicates, he speaks in rhymed couplets.

During the week Mr. Scooler reads and half acts the daily chapter from the serial, and very deftly handles the introductions for the many rabbis who appear before WEVD microphones. To fill in some sudden bald spots that temporarily appeared during the summer months, he read poetry by Bialik, acted as disk jockey for musical programs of a very high order (music by Bloch and Leonard Bernstein), and presented a program of readings from the *Tsena U'reena* (a

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simplified rendering in Yiddish of the first five books of the Bible, intended for women). These selections, as well as others from the *Pirke Avoth* (Sayings of the Fathers), were chanted in a beautiful and traditional style, with such simplicity that, listening, it was as if one were overhearing a scholar at his studies.

THE third in this galaxy of announcers, to introduce him by the least of his titles, is Nahum Stutchkoff. In 1950 Mr. Stutchkoff brought out, under the sponsorship of YIVO, a monumental 730-page *Thesaurus of the Yiddish Language*. For several years prior to this he conducted a program on Sunday mornings in which he would explain the origin and meaning of unfamiliar Yiddish words and phrases inquired about by his listeners. But his real gift is for setting down with electric brilliance intensely vivid vignettes of New York Jewish life. Every line rings with the solidity of truth and with the clarity of art; and the glare from the final likeness is sometimes too sharp to be borne. These talents are turned equally to the service of commercials and drama. These days the recipient of Stutchkoff's major dramatic work is a hospital fund for whom he does a weekly story introduced, as one might expect, by three chords from an organ, followed by Stutchkoff saying lugubriously, *"Tsores bei Leiten"* ("People's Troubles"). In these sketches the older generation speaks Yiddish, which in the context of the station, gives their characters depth and richness, and the younger generation speaks English, a particularly flat, nasal, and unappetizing brand of English, so that by contrast with the limpid speech of their elders they seem like incompetent, self-centered children. And, as it almost inevitably turns out, that is just what they are.

Not too long ago Stutchkoff had a sketch for Stuhmer's pumpernickel which began with the sound of children playing ball and birds singing, all indicating a park locale. Then we hear the braying voice of Stutchkoff's English-speaking young man. "What's the matter, Uncle?" says he. "What are you doing sitting over here and eating your lunch all by yourself?" We grasp the situation immediately. This is the annual family group picnic. Everybody, including the bachelor uncle, whom nobody sees from one end of the year to the next, has been rounded up for it. The young man, obviously an organizer type, feels a little guilty about this and wants to make up for his year-round neglect with a bit of extra attention on this particular Sunday. Despite his good intentions, it is clear to us all that the uncle feels himself offended. What the exact offense is, is difficult to say. Perhaps he was not invited with sufficient ceremony. Or a nephew spoke carelessly to him. Or a great-nephew did not know his name. Or he was not specially escorted to a place at the picnic table. Whatever the reason, the situation leaves something to be desired. Feeling himself unwanted, he has retired to a shady spot removed a little from the chatterers and is preparing to have his own carefully prepared sandwiches, when he is accosted by this coarse-minded busybody. But Uncle (played by Stutchkoff) knows how to deal with these difficulties and decides to gloss over it casually and with a joke.

"What am I doing?" he says (in Yiddish, of course). "I'm sitting here quietly and having my lunch on Stuhmer's pumpernickel."

"But why can't you sit with everybody? Why do you have to sit here all by yourself?" (The young man sometimes despairs at the difficulty of managing his family, especially the old ones with their inexplicable withdrawals and sulks.) Here Uncle fibs a little. "Oh," he says, "last year when everyone saw my wonderful sandwiches on Stuhmer's pumpernickel, they all grabbed them from me and I was left without anything to eat. But this year, I've decided to take the precaution of having my lunch in peace and quiet."

The story bursts upon us. Uncle is finicky about his meals. More than that, he has strong notions on what is and what isn't nourishing. Last year he came to the picnic and was revolted by the terrible concoctions he saw being fed to the children —frankfurters on roll, bologna sandwiches, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. Out of pity for their tender stomachs he had portioned out his own lunch among them—farmer cheese sandwiches on pumpernickel bread. But were the mothers grateful? The less said about it the better. The family reverberated with the scandal for half the following winter. "Who does he think he is," his niece Zelda had said, "feeding my chil-

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dren behind my back!" Can we blame him if this year he had decided to avoid lunch altogether?

PROBABLY the greatest commercial ever written was the one sponsored by Alka-Seltzer for its WEVD audience. Network radio has finally caught up with it in the spot announcements for Schweppes soda. But some ten years ago over WEVD you could hear an announcer drop an Alka-Seltzer tablet into a glass of water and then a sound of energetic fizzing. *"Her vie es szhuszhet un buszhet,"* he would exclaim. *"Azoi vet es szhuszhen un buszhen bei dir im bauch."* ("Listen to the way it fizzles and sizzles. This is how it sizzles and fizzles in your stomach.") This is the kind of creative advertising that comes off best over WEVD. The commercials that translate from the English slogans somehow miss fire. "Drive out stubborn dirt," for example, is rendered literally in Yiddish as: *"Treib ois akshunis-dike shmutz."* This strikes the ear as an oddly foreign concatenation of words. Compare that phrase with the power of *"Kvel oon fun Vel"* ("Rejoice with Vel"), using a verb normally reserved to describe the way a doting grandparent will look at a grandchild, which also contributes an interlingual pun. Then there is the scouring powder which trumpets forth a clarion call: *"Beryas!!* Reinigt eier haim gicher vie a riche"* ("Housewives! Clean your house quick as a flash.") The Kraft Oil people also seem to have made a close study of their market and emerged with a commercial that starts, "When King Solomon said, 'There is nothing new under the sun,' he could not have foreseen Kraft Oil." Not to be outdone, during the period between Passover and Shavuoth when weddings are forbidden, Hellman's Mayonnaise urged WEVD listeners as follows: "During this time when we can attend no weddings, the longing for romance can be satisfied by making Wedding Ring Salad"—a gelatinous combination of fruits and mayonnaise. (At this point I always felt that the Hellman's staff had been ill-advised, for I have yet to see a *berya* who troubled herself with gelatin salads.)

Recipes are taken very seriously on WEVD and the women's programs run *by* women do not, on the whole, dare to engage so weighty a subject. Rather, they deal lightly with women in the news, and try to keep the listeners up to some very minimal mark as women and housewives. One quarter-hour program, for example, dealt with how to apply lipstick and keep it on, and described the process as if the listener had never held a lipstick in her hand before this broadcast. During one September, just before the holidays, the housewives were exhorted to make an effort to see that their tables were festively decorated for the holiday season. It was suggested that tablecloths be used, and further that apples and honey be placed on the tables as appropriate to the New Year.

AND what, one might well ask, does all this have to do with Eugene V. Debs and that great free-thinking socialist newspaper of the Jewish masses—the *Jewish Daily Forward?* I leave it to the reader to consider the chain of events which have brought these elements into such an intimate companionship.

In 1927 the Social Democratic party founded the station and named it for Debs. After four years of operation this group found itself in a shaky financial condition and came to the *Forward* with the suggestion that the *Forward* buy it out. A survey conducted by the *Forward* showed that it would have to put between $150,000 and $175,000 into the station to operate it properly. Undismayed, the *Forward* seized this opportunity to possess yet another instrument in the service of the labor movement. A committee of twenty-five was appointed to operate the station, and for the first three years the *Forward* supplied the funds to cover the deficit. Now occupying two and a half floors in a modest but substantial building on West 46th Street, Station WEVD considers itself an independent enterprise, although its spiritual connection with the *Forward* has not been entirely severed. The "Forward Hour" is, and has been for years, the high point of WEVD's broadcasting week. The *Forward* has also traveled a distance since 1927, so that independently of one another, the *Forward* and WEVD have

*In a paradigm in which *baalebosta* would be the comparative form, *berya* would be the superlative. Or the impact of this advertisment might be likened to a situation in which a field of dray horses was suddenly addressed as "Stallions!"

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maintained a parallel course. Today both interest themselves sympathetically in Zionist affairs, report religious news respectfully, and take up an enthusiastic defense and advocacy of the position of the Jew in America.

The manager of the station, Henry Greenfield, a former *Forward* ad man, still harbors a bust of Debs in his office, as well as a 1938 Stromberg-Carlson console over which he listens to WEVD programs. He estimates that some one-and-three-quarter million Jews are at home in Yiddish in the New York metropolitan area, and it is to this group, naturally, that WEVD directs its first attention.

Of the ninety-three hours a week that WEVD is on the air, fifty-three are in Yiddish, fourteen are divided among eight other foreign languages, and the remaining twenty-six are English-language programs of a public-service, general cultural nature, which are presented in the evening.

For the Jews, of course, the real WEVD exists during the working day between eight and four, before the strange sounds of Spanish maraccas begin to fill the air. And there is a seriousness and intensity with which the older generation listens, if a letter from one of their representatives to the Jewish Philosopher gives any clue to their temper. In this letter the writer, a grandmother, describes her differences with her daughter over the upbringing of her grandchild, and writes in conclusion, "Must I believe, as she tells me, that all the wisdom of present times is confined to the younger generation?" But here in the company of some very talented and charming gentlemen, the old lady is assured that not all the chips have been won by the other side.

THE TEL AT GIVAT OZ

AHARON GISNET

At Givat Oz today, we stood on a high Tel
Where three or four cultures rust in gentle
Oblivion. Under a wrapper of fine winter hay,
All green and bending to the sickle bar,
A quarry of notions, antique bones, a glazed jar
Thin and graceful as a one-legged heron
In the Hula swamp, await the antiquarian's devotion.

I thought, what diverse yields from this stiff clay
Skin, so slow to cede to the tender ministration
Of stubborn Halutzim: first corn, grudgingly given,
Then in the rotation a little wheat; that failed,
As green manure was plowed in. . . .

High, piped notes enfiling the border to the Arab side
Disarrayed our flow of conservation talk. From black hide
To black hide dancing, sunbeams ride
The grazing goats to pasture up the Tel!

Now, on stalwart oaten stems whose upright heads shake golden curls
O'er bending waves of crowded green, the tendriled baccia furls
Its pleasant weight of harvest. Four hundred kilo they bale,
Per dunam of the first day's cut! Patience pays in Israel!

Aharon Gisnet was born in New York City in 1915, and emigrated to Israel in 1949, where he now lives in the kibbutz Deganya Aleph.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

THE ROTHSCHILD OF THE PAINTERS

From the Memoirs of Moritz Daniel Oppenheim — II

ONE chapter from Moritz Daniel Oppenheim's *Erinnerungen*, translated by me from the German original, has already appeared in this department, in the October 1954 number. The present selection from the same book (written about 1880, shortly before the artist's death, but published only in 1924) describes the Jewish painter's rise to fame. After four years of study in France and Italy, Oppenheim, at the age of twenty-five, returned to Frankfort on the Main in May 1825.

Some of the dramatis personae in his memoirs are of historical interest. Moritz von Bethmann is an ancestor of that Bethmann-Hollweg who served as German chancellor from 1909 to 1917. "Uncle Amschel" is Amschel Mayer von Rothschild (1773-1855), the eldest of the five sons of the founder of the Rothschild dynasty. Anselm von Rothschild (1803-1874), the only son of Solomon Mayer von Rothschild, another of the famous "five," was, like his wife Charlotte, an art collector. The Naples branch of the Rothschild firm was founded by Carl Mayer Rothschild (1788-1855). "Rachel" was the stage name of the celebrated French Jewish actress, Elisa Rachel Felix (1820-1858). Marcus Koenigswarter was one of five brothers (sons of Jonas Koenigswarter) who founded important banking houses in Frankfort and elsewhere. Gabriel Riesser (1806-1863), himself a Jew, was a champion of Jewish emancipation, and in 1848 a deputy to the German National Assembly; he was elected a vice president of the Assembly (not president, as Oppenheim erroneously recalls). The painter Philipp Veit (1793-1877) was the son of Dorothea Mendelssohn—daughter of the Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn—by a first marriage. Her second husband was the writer Friedrich von Schlegel, who had Philipp baptized. Both Dorothea and Philipp were practicing Catholics, and the latter became a leader of the "Nazarenes,"a group of German painters who turned to the "Christian purity" of the Middle Ages. Salomon Stiebel (1792-1868), who became a convert to Christianity, was a leading Frankfort physician, and Privy Councillor to the Duke of Nassau.—ALFRED WERNER

THE patricians of Frankfort called on me. Moritz von Bethmann (the father), Jean Noé Dufay, and others came . . . and commissioned pictures. The wife of the Elector of Hesse also favored me with a visit and later wrote me a very gracious letter. All this recognition brought me honor, and numerous commissions. Particularly, I did many portraits for the wealthiest Jewish families, and was well paid for them. I painted some lovely Jewish maidens and exhibited their portraits at the "Museum" (out of which grew the present Museum Society), and received the diploma of honorary membership, a distinction which up to then had not been bestowed upon any Jew.

Later, the Rothschild family gave me a lot of work to do. The branch that had been in Naples resettled here, and established a princely household, as did Baron Anselm and his art-loving wife, Charlotte. I was invited to the most distinguished and dazzling social gatherings. . . . The Baroness Charlotte asked me whether I would give her instruction. I replied that it was not my practice to give instruction, but I was at her service, gladly and wholly. She noticed the haughtiness that came through these words, and said: "Baron Gérard has also taught me, and I paid him a louis d'or for each lesson." This annoyed me a little, but I only repeated that I was entirely at her service. . . . That she was very satisfied with her

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teacher was shown by her frequent visits to my studio, and her amiable little letters to me in French. . . . She also had me decorate the cupola of her house. I decorated the eight panels with mythological subjects, presenting her as Psyche, without saying anything to her. She quickly noticed it. I also composed poems for her on special occasions.

But the culmination of my instruction came when she illustrated the Haggadah for her Uncle Amschel. I made the designs for the subjects, and she carried them out in the style of the old missals. . . . For this, she procured . . . from the Paris Library manuscripts with illuminated miniatures. The best Jewish calligrapher of the day, Messeritz, inscribed the text, and the book certainly cost the Baroness several thousand gulden. I came to be known as "painter of the Rothschilds," and "Rothschild of the painters."

At that time the Deutsche Bundestag [German National Assembly] was at its height, and all the delegates, with their staffs, often gathered . . . at the home of Baron Anselm von Rothschild . . . [which was] full of the rarest *objets d'art*. The only thing missing was . . . good pictures, and I succeeded in acquiring for the Baroness the famous collection of Herr de Reus of The Hague: the required sum, about 100,000 florins, was immediately allowed to her by her consort. Indeed . . . the Herr Baron . . . granted his wife any sum of money she asked for. Once, when she wanted 2,000 florins from the cashier of the House of Rothschild, by mistake she wrote one extra zero: 20,000 florins. The cashier thought he ought first to ask the Baron for authorization to pay out this unusually large sum, but the Baron reproved him angrily: "You need not come to me in such a case; whatever, as much as, my wife asks, give her immediately." So it happened that a wheelbarrow laden with twenty sacks of gold was sent to her, the sight of which amazed her, naturally.

I remember especially . . . certain celebrations at the Rothschild home . . . [one] in honor of the famous actress Rachel. . . . Everyone was eager . . . to be presented to her. I kept modestly in the background. Baron Anselm noticed it and he took me by the arm and led me to her. I shall never forget the fine, noble, poetic appearance of this artist, and her diction (she recited a scene from [Racine's] *Esther*). Another evening, *tableaux* were given. I had been entrusted with the arrangements for them . . . and the most beautiful, the wealthiest young people placed themselves at my disposal. . . . No less a man than Minister Blittersdorf assisted me at rehearsals and at the performance. The next day Baron Anselm cut me in on two hundred 40-Taler kurhessian shares which yielded me a substantial profit. My circumstances improved greatly, and . . . I was able to repay my brother Simon . . . all he had loaned me during my student years.

I MARRIED the good, devout Adelheid Cleve, who had remained loyal to me notwithstanding all the difficulties created by her grandmother who opposed the match. My beloved Adelheid pleased everyone—she was pretty, had very interesting features, and at the same time was charming and amiable.

Once, when we were at a party at Marcus Koenigswarter's, he introduced me to several officers, saying: "Herr Professor Oppenheim is a painter, but, praise God, he doesn't need to be." These words, curiously enough, became known all over Germany and made me more famous than my pictures did. . . .

To my friendship with Dr. Gabriel Riesser I owe many happy experiences. [His] triumphs, which . . . culminated in his election as president of the parliament, gave me the greatest joy. I was and remain proud of this great man's friendship and love for me. How witty and affectionate was the biography he wrote of me! When he asked me for facts, I said: "A good cook can make even a leather glove appetizing with a good sauce!"—and how skilled Riesser was at making a piquant sauce!

A good many scholars and artists used to get together every fortnight at old Juegel's home. The name of this club was *Hanswurstika* (Buffoonery). At the gay [club] suppers . . . my own humorous verse, composed for the occasion, met with enthusiasm, especially at one celebration which the club gave for the Juegel family. My ditties were sung over and over. . . .

I valued the artist in Philipp Veit, and in spite of everything I was fond of the man himself. When he came to Frankfort to be director of the Staedel Institute, he moved

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into a very modest dwelling on the Grosse Gallusgasse. I frequently spent the evening in his family circle. His mother, Dorothea von Schlegel, lived with them; when her grandchildren . . . came to wish her good night, she gave them her blessing with the sign of the cross; this coming from the daughter of Moses Mendelssohn made a painful impression on me. As ostentatiously pious as was the mother in the expression of her Catholicism, so undemonstrative were her certainly no less pious children. Veit talked to me neither about his Jewish origin nor of his later Catholic faith. Except once when we met at the Roeder confectionery, and I made the remark that when I ate ice cream I often thought of his grandfather: he was said to have liked sugar so much that he was sorry he "could not eat sugar with sugar"; at this, Veit started to talk about a picture I was then working on, which represented the famous episode, "Lavater's Visit to Moses Mendelssohn." Lavater tries to convert Mendelssohn, and demands, in fact, that Mendelssohn either yield and be baptized or publicly set forth his objections. Veit admitted that he was not familiar with this episode from his grandfather's life, and I told him how . . . embarrassing the situation had been for Mendelssohn, and how he had grieved about the fact that he could not speak up. . . . Only to the Duke of Braunschweig, who pleaded with him, did he reveal his objections. Veit sighed and said: "Who knows how much he has to suffer for it now!" [i. e. in Hell]. Apart from this, Veit was a rather clever man.

ABOUT that time Heinrich Heine came to Frankfort; he had already made a name for himself . . . especially through his *Travel Sketches,* whose jokes struck their most responsive chords in Jewish circles. . . . I painted him and later he wrote me from Paris that I should send this portrait to his publisher Campe, which I did. Heine was my guest one midday, on a Saturday. I had also invited some of his admirers and, to please him, had had prepared for him a typical Jewish meal, *Kuchel* and *Schalet* [*kugel* and *tcholent*], which Heine ate heartily. I remarked jokingly that this kind of food must make him feel homesick. . . . The talk then turned to his baptism; one of the guests asked what had made him do it. . . . Heine answered evasively that he "found it harder to have a tooth pulled than to change his religion."

[Writing later] of his visit to Frankfort, Heine speaks of the good Sabbath meal he ate at the home of the future Privy Councillor Stiebel. Now of course he remembered quite well that he had eaten that Sabbath meal [elsewhere]. . . . No doubt he was maliciously trying to provoke the newly baptized Jew by connecting him up with such an Old Testament cuisine. I saw when I talked with Dr. Stiebel about it, that Heine's needle-jab had not missed its mark.

Shortly before the July Revolution [of 1830] I also painted Boerne's portrait, which now hangs in the Staedel Gallery at Frankfort: Boerne wrapped up his fee to me in a few witty lines . . . "There is a curse in money; thank me for cursing you so moderately." . . .

Later, I had the portraits of Boerne and Heine lithographed, and they were published as a set by the art and book dealer Koenig, in Hanover.

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ON THE HORIZON

ZIONIST REVIVAL ON THE CAMPUS?

A Report on the SZO Founding Convention

JACOB NEUSNER

ZIONISM was originally a movement to revive the Jewish people; today, one might say, Zionism is chiefly a movement to revive Zionism. Lately it has focused its attention on youth. How else assure recruits for that much desired and much debated Western *aliyah*—emigration to Israel from the United States? Where else develop Zionism's leaders for tomorrow?

Last December, the American Zionist Council, the representative body of all Zionist organizations, sponsored a convention at Columbia University in New York City of the Student Zionist Organization, in an effort to gather all college Zionist groups in a new national federation.

According to old-timers, undoubtedly prejudiced as old-timers are, the three hundred delegates gathered in the dingy gray auditorium of Earle Hall were not of the same mettle as those at former Zionist conventions. There were fewer hard-bitten types, fewer specimens of the ancient dogmatists; there was less extreme idealism; and almost no political partisanship. The students, in age from seventeen to twenty-five, were indistinguishable in costume or demeanor from the general run of American college boys and girls.

As everyone knows, the years between 1948 and 1954 have worn hard on political enthusiasts; so it was no surprise that, except for an incongruous delegate of Hashomer Hatzair (Marxist) and a couple of members of Mizrachi (religious), few delegates had any serious party affiliation. So lacking did the convention show itself in the robust vigor of the "old days," that one observer wondered aloud whether the Zionist revival might not die of boredom. Indeed, it was possible to wonder whether many of the younger delegates were Zionists at all. Asked whether she felt that she was living in *galut* (exile), one pretty young student wanted to know what the word meant. It turned out that she had never read a book on Zionism except for a novel about "the War of Independence." At their socials, the delegates went through the expected *horas* and Israeli folk dances, but without the vigor and conviction they seemed able to bring to the fox trot.

In the end, one could not avoid feeling a certain unreality about the meeting. As one alert student commented, "What we have to fight against is not the anti-Zionist or the assimilationist. Apathy to the whole issue is

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WITH the establishment of Israel as a nation, American Zionism found itself in a new era for which apparently nothing had prepared it—like, as someone has said, a mother whose grown children are suddenly no longer in the house, or the father of the bride. In any case, the American movement in all its branches has been casting about to find a role in the altered scene, and a reason for continued existence. Here JACOB NEUSNER reports on one such effort at revaluation and revival in a key sensitive area —for what hope is there without the youth? And in America the youth to whom one must look for future leadership is on the campus. Mr. Neusner was born in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1932. He received his B.A. from Harvard in 1953, and then spent a year at Oxford, on a fellowship, studying history with Cecil Roth. Last summer he was in Israel. He is now a rabbinical student at the Jewish Theological Seminary and has contributed to the *Reconstructionist* and *Opinion*, and to the *Jewish Chronicle* of London and other British publications.

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our real enemy." Many delegates represented only themselves or perhaps one or two others. One Southerner, for example, confessed that his chapter had six members out of two thousand Jewish students, while an Ivy Leaguer mentioned the "four or five who carry the program and come to meetings" out of a thousand Jewish students. The metropolitan universities in New York, Boston, Chicago, and Los Angeles reported memberships as high as twenty and forty. But even these figures are negligible considering the total number of Jewish students and the present general concern with Judaism and Jewish affairs on the campus.

On the surface, the current conclave appeared not much different from Zionist conventions in the past. From the first Student Zionist Society at CCNY in 1903 to the short-lived Inter-Collegiate Zionist Federation of America (1945-1953), campus Zionists have been meeting, issuing manifestoes of policy, caucusing, launching ambitious programs, talking a great deal, and fading away. The Student Zionist Society of CCNY expanded into a nine-chapter College Zionist League of America in 1905. By 1915 it had been replaced by the Intercollegiate Zionist Association. This group petered out by 1921, and was succeeded in 1925 by Avukah. Avukah, a hardy plant of fifteen years' duration, derived its extraordinary vigor more from extra-Zionist activities, such as "anti-fascism," than from Zionism.

Avukah's successor, the Inter-Collegiate Zionist Federation of America, a multi-party group sponsored principally by the General Zionist Youth Commission, but sporadically also by everyone from the Labor Zionists to Mizrachi, concentrated on offering non-sectarian programs. IZFA reached a peak of eight thousand members between 1945 and 1949. In 1954, with only twelve hundred remaining, it dissolved for "complicated financial reasons." IZFA achieved certain results, both in successful chapters and in emigration to Israel (between 50 and 100), but by the spring of 1954 the decline in membership had led to a small, ingrown group of familiars meeting regularly in convention to elect one another to office. A graduation or two proved fatal to some chapters, and a not insoluble financial difficulty served as a pretext for dissolution.

Nevertheless, since college societies should be judged not in terms of their own survival but on their contribution of leaders to the community, collegiate Zionism's record is perhaps creditable enough. Each succeeding organization developed new and distinguished figures for the Zionist cause. From the Intercollegiate Zionist Association, for example, came Mr. Justice Frankfurter, Judges Julian Mack and Louis E. Levinthal, Marie Syrkin, and Rabbis Norman Salit and James G. Heller. One small Zionist club in New York City included Rabbis Abba Hillel Silver, Barnett Brickner, and Abraham J. Feldman.

IN COMMON with past conventions, the SZO seemed to sit interminably and to draw from bottomless wells of speech.

But then there was a lot in the present situation to ponder and talk about. College authorities are, in many places, wary of encouraging anything more political than bowling clubs. And students themselves, as we have noted, by and large avoid political commitment of any kind. Jewish sororities and fraternities have tended to limit any other effort at Jewish identification than that offered by themselves. Assistance from Hillel, the most vigorous and all-embracing Jewish campus enterprise today, depends on the individual directors and members, whose interest in Israel may not be attended by equal interest in sectarian Zionism. Even if Zionism were now a fresh and unfulfilled ideal, campus Zionists would still in the present climate have difficult dilemmas to solve in order to survive and grow.

But the most difficult problem of all is the elementary one of what the term Zionism itself means. In the old days, despite all doctrinal differences, everyone knew what Zionism was. Now that the State of Israel has been established everyone recognizes, but no one is quite ready to define, the distinction between mere pro-Israel sentiment and "true" Zionism; and there is all the difference in the world between the two in depth of commitment and dynamic. What are Zionists to *do* now that we have Israel?

"Hadassah has its drugs and doctors. What do we have?" asks a delegate. The program committee suggested—quite seriously—that a special function of SZO might be "to send animals to the Biblical Zoo in Jerusalem, one for each college: Yale will send a bulldog,

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Princeton a tiger, Columbia a lion." "Is this," someone wondered, "our contribution to *aliyah?*" Another objected: "What if the Biblical Zoo won't accept animals not mentioned in the Bible? I don't think they'd want a Yukon Huskie!" On the third ballot, the motion to dispatch a latter-day ark to Israel was passed by a small margin. It was the only issue aside from *aliyah* itself to arouse serious controversy. Clearly, even if SZO carries out its less bizarre projects—collecting textbooks, records, and books for the two IZFA *kibbutzim* (Yiftach and Hagovrim, both of which are already fairly well stocked), and setting up projects to teach Hebrew and disseminate pro-Israel publicity—it will still be as far as ever from a defined and meaningful Zionism.

Debates on emigration to Israel emphasized the stark bewilderment of the campus Zionists about this and about the unhappily inescapable central issue that underlies all Zionist debate today—what is the function of *galut* Zionism (Zionism in "exile")—what, as a matter of fact, exactly is *galut?* In what sense must the American Jewish student think of himself as in exile? The question of *aliyah* roused passionate emotions, and no delegate failed to express an opinion, however vague or confused. To most students, however, the issue was personally irrelevant, merely an intellectual exercise; only a tiny fraction even think of emigrating to Israel. Yet a motion was produced: "SZO considers *aliyah* the highest means of fulfilling Zionist ideals."

One speaker for the resolution said: "How can you be a Zionist without *aliyah?* We are a student Zionist organization, not Hillel or United Synagogue Youth! The dream of Zionism is redemption through *aliyah*. Let's not worry about frightening people away. If we chase anyone away with this resolution, he was not worth having in the first place." The negative argument rested mainly on the practical danger: "This will discourage people from joining. It is one thing to encourage *aliyah*. It is another to say that *aliyah* is the highest form of Zionism. The primary question is whether this will have a negative effect or not. What really counts in SZO is what is in the program, not statements about the highest form. . . . There are many positive Jews, not Zionists but potential Zionists, who will work with us. There must be a place beyond Hillel for the positive Jew and Zionist, between Hillel and an actual *aliyah* group. This is the place for SZO." The resolution was defeated by a two-to-one vote, but the chairman summed up: "We all really agree on the motion, but cooler heads have prevailed because no one wants to chase people away." SZO then decided "to encourage *aliyah* and to implement an educational program to this end."

While the substitute motion to this effect passed unanimously, it is obvious that for many of the delegates, personal *aliyah* is not a Zionist first principle; animals and aid to the *halutzim* suffice.

THE conflict of aim, as between the hard goal of "returning" to the Jewish homeland and the easier one of promoting pro-Israel sentiment and "activities," was reflected also in the debate on whether SZO is to seek a "mass membership" or a select, intellectual elite. But at no point did a clear-cut choice emerge. Although the members showed themselves firmly opposed to diluting what they thought were the ideals of true Zionism, perhaps only with the object of making the right gesture, they were nevertheless uneasily aware of the mass of the unaffiliated. Significantly, the fear of alienating this mass—which was the only argument advanced against advertising "*aliyah* as the highest form of Zionism"—appealed to the delegates as deeply pertinent. Likewise, in the discussions on the Hebrew language, some members opposed the use of Hebrew in announcements because "it might frighten people away," although a Hebrew seminar was proposed to provide the movement with "people who feel a real obligation and sense of responsibility. These people would be an elite to transmit their knowledge of Hebrew and Zionism."

The adult advisers present showed themselves equally confused on this basic point: for some the objective of the American Zionist movement is to organize small groups of elite, to educate them in Zionism and Judaism, avoiding any kind of competition with large-scale "social activities"; others prefer an "American-style" program of conventions, elections, publicity, and all else needed for "mass appeal." The students and their advisers apparently aim at eating their cake and having it too, by producing some kind

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of synthesis of the two ideals. And in actuality, the SZO program tries to hitch small groups, representing some kind of elite, to a program suited for thousands and tens of thousands. Education, propaganda, Jewish National Fund forests, even animals—these are enterprises best carried out by enthusiastic committees and widespread competitions. In aiming at amorphous "masses," the SZO may run the risk of neglecting its own elite.

THE motto of the convention was Herzl's "In the beginning is the Idea." The new SZO did not depart from the traditional ideas of Zionism. In a printed statement, one of the students surveyed the classic arguments for a Jewish state: a refuge, he called it, a place in which to be "normal," a fulfillment of the messianic dream. He posed as *the* new problem: "The place . . . of the State of Israel . . . in our lives while we still live in the *galut*." As ideas, these are nothing new, nor need they be. From them came the fervor of a Ben Gurion, a Weizmann, a Maurice Samuel; these categories of thought have sufficed for fifty years of political Zionism. Likewise the general aims of SZO are classic and simple. The organization's first president, Adena Mosevitzky, a Brooklyn-born girl who was graduated from Hunter and expects to settle in Israel in three years, put it thus: "We seek to involve Zionist students in discussion and in action on as many campuses as possible. We seek to educate people about Jewish culture, history, customs, and Zionism. We seek to motivate members to consider that full Jewish living is vital and possible for themselves, and to consider whether it is desirable to fulfill the values and carry on the creative cultural achievement of the Jews in a majority-Jewish culture." But what ambiguity, at the least, in this last carefully worded phrase.

These objectives bear little realistic relation even to the lives of the present founding core of SZO, whom we may take to be more congenial to accepting them than the sought-for "mass" of rank-and-file contemporaries. College students, by and large, do not need a refuge; they feel "normal"; and they scarcely comprehend, much less experience, the "messianic dream." For most, the idea of "*galut*," of being in exile, is meaningless. The majority culture with which Jewish students are concerned is the majority culture of American colleges. Their real problem is not how to be drawn away from it but how to be Jews and yet be a part of it.

One could not help noting how many delegates at the founding convention, however much they looked the regular, "real" American student, revealed only a tenuous connection to this majority culture; some were, as observant Jews, a precious rarity on their campuses; a few had the stamp of unsuccessful participants in the dominant campus life; some were simply there on a junket, possibly to please their parents, the student Zionists of yesterday. Zionism, to many, apparently provides a handy outlet, a possible compensation; to very few is it a way to full Jewish living through Zion. *If some felt themselves in* galut, *it was not a cosmic or a national exile but a social one.*

But even if the SZO had represented a haphazardly chosen cross-section of Jewish college youth, the final picture might not have been significantly different. The average Jewish college student in this country is known to be indifferent and illiterate in Jewish matters, certainly unprepared for any commitment so fervent as Zionism. Since the student intensely reflects the community from which he comes, SZO can only hope to gain members prepared to fulfill its aims when the communities turn out literate and dedicated Jews prepared to maintain on the campuses respectable institutions of religion and culture. When Zionism in the community becomes more than attending dinners and contributing funds, then perhaps students, too, will approach the movement as more than an opportunity for social association and organizational activity.

In the context of the general indifference, SZO should worry less about getting more members or about developing spectacular programs, and more about how to involve individuals vitally concerned with their life as Jews. It might perhaps stop reaching out, and reach in—to its own membership. To seek a mass following in the near future, especially if it does not pause to raise the Jewish level of its present following, seems futile, and the necessary techniques of sensationalism might even drive off the more committed individuals they seek to attract. "The only time we get big meetings," said a

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Midwestern delegate, "is when there is trouble in Israel. At the time of Kibya, we had a very good attendance, because the papers publicized our meetings and the meetings had real punch." But student Zionism, if it is to achieve a wholesome liveliness, cannot limp from war to war.

THERE is, of course, no "one way" to involve students in a cause like Zionism; it is not like manufacturing a need for a commercial product. In seeking ways, SZO may well regard the content of its program as the first consideration. For that content, it must seek out the roots of Zionism, indeed of contemporary American Judaism itself, and these roots lie deep in the religious civilization to which East European Jewry was committed. From that civilization every modern Zionist movement draws its followers; to receive its remnants, Israel was built; and the Zionist appeal, even today, is phrased in a vocabulary designed to move the East European Jew.

Zionism, when it speaks at all, still speaks in this language (can Zionists know any other?). But to the recent generation of college Zionists, even to its most serious members, this language is alien; each year fewer students of any persuasion can be found who know the inner life of East European Jewry, even as lived or modified in America, or who even concern themselves with Jewishness in any form. Zionism can only be understood by the college student in terms of his own experience; to some, then, the idea of religious love of Zion means a kind of Jewish Sinn Fein, while to others, the idea of social-messianic vision represents merely a Jewish form of "New Deal" or "social gospel." To almost none—perhaps they have all departed for Israel—is Zionism the kind of fervent ideal of which an adult adviser to SZO said: "We who fought in 1948 were fighting that the Law might once again come forth from Zion. Nothing less, and certainly not for only another national state." Not merely Zionism was at stake, but Judaism itself. If the students, Zionist or non-Zionist, do not understand this language and these ideals, then it seems the task of SZO is to educate them, for the ideals and language will lose their integrity, their validity and force, through adaptation and dilution. In the old days, Jews were Zionists because, for whatever reason, they cared terribly about their Jewishness, as tradition and as future. Unless they care terribly now about being Jews, and what that means and has always meant *in essence*—that is, morally and religiously—the SZO college students will not be Zionists, or revive Zionism today. (And one remembers that much of the impulse and content of Zionism was originally Jewish cultural. But culture has long since been stripped away by the concentration on political activism and fund-raising; and the question is whether this may not be one of those irreversible processes.)

So it was hardly hopeful to hear delegates at the founding convention snigger when they were told, "To find the cause of Zionism, read the book of Isaiah or Jeremiah." And when the keynote speaker, Professor Eli Ginzberg, the Columbia economist, urged the delegates, in the question period, to consider "as part of an affirmative Judaism and Zionism the religion of the Jews," an uneasy rustle in the hall led to this quick qualification: "not necessarily in observance but in belief." If the Jewish university "elite" and the "hope of Zionism" yawn at Judaism, they can scarcely hope to learn the love of Zion which comes from a profound appreciation of the prayer: "And may our eyes behold Thy return to Zion in mercy. . . ." Nor can they gain more than a superficial notion of the social idealism which is a part of Judaism unless they understand also the prayer:

Remove from us sorrow
And the sighs of pain, and want.
And reign over us, O Lord Thou Alone!
In lovingkindness and tender mercy.

On a morning whose scheduled discussions were vital to the program of SZO, the convention was to open at ten o'clock. Eleven o'clock found the hall still deserted, except for one delegate, tired looking and bored. He was idly touching the keys of a piano, pressing the keys and making sound, but there was no melody. The notes on his portfolio read: "Weakness—ideology. Messianism? Old purpose eliminated 1948. Israel will have impact on American Jewry." These are the keys, no doubt; they make sounds, but no melody comes. Fled is that old Zionist music. . . . Forever?

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THE STUDY OF MAN

BOLSHEVIK MAN, HIS MOTIVATIONS

A Psychoanalytic Key to Communist Behavior

DANIEL BELL

DURING the early truce talks in Korea, American negotiators, headed by Admiral Joy, were equipped with a slim book which they used (almost like a manual on bridge strategy) to assess Communist tactics. A presumed problem: "If the Communists make a concession on procedure, should we in turn make a concession, or is this only a bluff to test our trumps?" The book was Nathan Leites's *Operational Code of the Politburo* (1951), a study undertaken for Project Rand, a research organization* subsidized by the Air Force which recruited some of the best mathematical and social science brains in the country. In a field where there is so much uncertainty, this reliance on a social science document was either a remarkable tribute to Leites's findings, or a reflection on the American character with its hope of obtaining the right "know-how" for every problem.

But the publication of the Operational Code was unfair to Leites—unfair both to his findings and to his method. The code was part of a larger study, and its publication as a fragment, with such terse, epigrammatic sentences as "The Party must not take the course of least resistance" made it seem like a handbook of Clausewitzian maxims. Few books, especially in politics, read well in schematic summary. A political generalization raised to the nth power can rarely hope to be more than a platitude. (Apart from the neat literary metaphor, what for example does Machiavelli's maxim that a prince should know how to use both beast and man, and in acting the beast be both fox and lion, truly mean?) And no serious political theory can be reduced to a "handbook."

In the recently published *A Study of Bolshevism*, Leites now presents his analysis of Communist behavior in all its necessary complexity. This massive volume is on one level a codification of Bolshevik precepts of political strategy; but it is much more than that. On a second level, it can be seen as a history of the changing moral temper of the Russian intelligentsia; but it is more than that, too. For both these aspects of the study are skillfully made to serve its final and most ambitious purpose: a psychoanalytic interpretation of political behavior, offering a definition of the "Bolshevik character" as a type distinct in social history. On all its levels, the book's method is to search for

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IN Nathan Leites's monumental volume *A Study of Bolshevism* (The Free Press, 639 pp., $6.50), an effort is made, through the insights of psychoanalysis, as well as by other more conventional methods, to assess the character and motivations of the Bolshevik—that new man who haunts our age—in such a way as to offer practical guidance for the enormous political and military problems that the free world must face. DANIEL BELL here outlines Leites's analysis and offers a judgment of the validity of its point of view and of its possible usefulness as a guide to action in the cold war. Mr. Bell, lecturer in sociology at Columbia University and an associate editor of *Fortune*, has long been a student of Marxist thought. His monograph on the American left, published in 1952 by Princeton University Press in *Socialism and American Life*, is being revised and expanded for separate publication by Doubleday and Company in 1955.

*Rand now also does independent work under foundation grants. Work for the Air Force, which initiated the organization, is published as "Project Rand"; independent work is issued by the Rand Corporation.

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"clues," seeking to isolate from a mass of material those recurrent elements of behavior and ideas which seem to illuminate the large historical and political forces as an individual's chance gestures and speech may illuminate the real forces of his character. What these "clues" lead to is an effort at a *complete* character definition of Bolshevik leadership.

On the one level, the codification of Bolshevik strategy, drawn largely from Bolshevik writings plus a fascinating assortment from pre-Soviet Russian intellectuals, is similar to a Mishnah which combines like precepts from different sections of the Pentateuch and groups them under common headings. And like the Mishnah, it is not a compilation of theological ideas (in this instance, say, the nationalities question, collectivization, the structure of the party, etc.), but an explication of rules of conduct. For Bolshevism is not only an ideology but an organizational code and manual; and the study of its norms of behavior defines the character of the men who are guided by these rules.

The attempt to define historic character is not unique. We have the image, somewhat overworked these days, of the "inner-directed Protestant" with his code of work, of the Puritan and his ascetic mode, the Elizabethan man with robust appetites, the Junker with his code of honor, etc. What makes Leites's work unique are the novel categories he chooses, and, above all, his method.

There is no observation of behavior. Like Max Weber, who drew his "Protestant ethic" from the writings of Luther, Calvin, Baxter, and others, Leites scans the writings of Lenin and Stalin to infer similar norms which guide the Bolshevik party. Bolshevism, Leites argues, has a characteristic stance, and a rigid one: seeking first to define this stance, he deduces a pattern of habitual actions from which, in his view, we should be able to predict typical Bolshevik responses to typical situations.

Leites reads the Bolshevik character as a "reaction" to the Oblomovs who slept away their lives; to the Rudins, the high-flown talkers but never doers; to the indecisive, soul-sick, moody students. The Bolshevik, as Boris Pilnyak put it, is against "the old peasant roots of our old Russian history, against its aimlessness, its non-teleological character . . . against the philosophy of Tolstoy's Karataev." The moral training of the Russian intelligentsia stressed both the prohibition against egotism and the prohibition against "dirtying oneself." Chekhov said once, "If the Socialists are going to exploit the cholera for their own ends, I shall despise them. . . ." But for the Bolshevik, refusal to use bad means is merely an expression of sentimentality and stupidity—in Bolshevik doctrine the worst egotist is precisely he who refuses to soil himself. The party strives for humanity, and "purity" lies not in a personal refusal to act immorally but in dedication to the party. In such dedication the individual finds his defense against both egotism and personal impurity.

In contrast to the Russian intelligentsia who spoke of ultimate things and sacred values, the Bolsheviks maintain silence about the sacred. Against the vice of outpouring emotion, the Bolsheviks uphold the virtue of reserve. Against the older Russian tendency to depressed passivity, introspection, nervous impressionability and excited babbling, against the protracted searchings for metaphysical truths and the posing of unanswerable questions—against all these, there is the determinism of history, the certainty of purpose, the reserve, the commitment to action, the control, the ability not to take personal offense, the "masculinity" of action. Against the fear of a life with nothing to strive for, a life filled with uncontrollable, impulsive gratifications which arouse anxiety and guilt and thus lead to the famous Russian flirtation with death —Gorky tells the story of his youth when boys would lie immobile on the railroad track while trains passed over them—against this there are the constant goals of work and the party. Death is merely the point at which one has outlived one's *usefulness*. Of the suicide of Marx's grandson Lafargue, Lenin wrote: ". . . if one cannot work for the party any longer, one must be able to look truth in the face and die like the Lafargues."

Out of such elements of ethics and moral temper there emerges in Leites's view the "operational code in politics."

For Bolshevism, all politics is summed up in the formula *kto kovo,* literally "who-whom," but in its most radical sense: *who kills whom.* Political relations are between dominators and dominated, between users and used. There can be no neutrals. To be one of the used is ultimately to be annihilated. All spontaneity is a danger because elation or excitement or any uncalculated act may lead to loss of control and thus to being used. Full "consciousness,"

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control, rigidity become the political mode. This does not mean that Russians are automatons (though Gromyko at times may seem to be one), but that their moods—their anger, rage, pity, gallantry (Malenkov picking flowers for Edith Summerskill)—are "instrumental." Nor does it mean that each act is calculated or contrived, but that in the integration of the personality all actions tend to be *patterned*; in a sense, one might say that the Bolshevik spontaneously acts in an unspontaneous and premeditated way.

If politics is *kto kovo,* then all political strategies are guided by this fundamental rule: one pushes to the limit, one refuses to be provoked, one acts when one is ready. Stated in these gross terms, the precepts become political commonplaces, akin to the generalized precepts of military strategists or the maxims of Machiavelli. What gives Leites's analysis its special point and quality is the nuances of detail: Bolshevik use of procedural points for trading; the expectations that personal insults will be taken politically and not personally (Vishinsky contemptuously calls Romulo an empty barrel in the UN General Assembly, and then sends roses to a reception at Romulo's home); the role of provocations, etc.

Is "Bolshevik" character the same as it was fifty years ago? In important respects yes—Leites believes that there are certain invariant patterns. Before 1917, Bolshevism as a small party faced a hostile state; now, in its view, it faces a hostile world—its basic posture remains. Prerevolutionary behavior toward rival political organizations once displayed itself in small cafés and drafty meeting halls; now its scene is the great assembly halls of world politics: the same behavior repeats itself. The preoccupation with procedural issues—arising from the belief that a small point will "inevitably" grow into a big one and must not be conceded—which was displayed by Lenin on the constitution of the editorial board of *Iskra* in 1900 (when he was "co-existing" with rival Social Democrats), is duplicated in intra-party disputes in 1921, and again at international negotiations at Yalta, San Francisco, and the conference of foreign ministers in 1945.

This same rigidity and calculatedness of behavior the Bolsheviks ascribe to their adversaries. The "big bourgeoisie" are seen as the Bolsheviks see themselves—i.e., as *serious,* calculating men who, wielding power, obey the "laws" of power. Political acts are not accidental; any act of the opposing ruling class ("Why at this time, comrades. . . .") can only be a hostile move in the constant war whose final outcome must be the annihilation of one side or the other. For the petty bourgeoisie, on the other hand, particularly the liberals, the Bolsheviks have only deep contempt; they are sentimental, given to illusions, deceived by the content of ideologies, moralistic, in short, fundamentally *unserious.*

The political consequence of this analysis is inescapable: if politics is *kto kovo,* then "coexistence" as a sustained *modus vivendi* is impossible. Leites sums it up flatly: ". . . a 'settlement' in Western terms, with outside groups —an agreement sharply and indefinitely reducing the threat of mutual annihilation—is inconceivable, [although] agreements with them, codifying the momentary relationship of forces, must always be considered and often concluded." But the party "maintains a full awareness of the basic conflict," and at the strategic moment presses forward again. Promises, as Lenin said, are like pie crusts, "made to be broken."

II

But let us now look more closely at Leites's use of psychoanalysis, for the true novelty of his book lies there.

To say, as Leites does, that the sources of Bolshevik character lie in a reaction to the extreme temper of the Russian intelligentsia in the 19th century, is still to write history without the help of Freud; Lenin and his co-workers were perfectly *conscious* of their attempts to reverse traditional patterns of Russian character, to overcome Karataev and Oblomov. But when Leites speaks of the Bolshevik character as a "reaction formation" to *unconscious,* overwhelmingly powerful wishes, he is approaching politics in a way that was impossible before psychoanalysis.

Two principal drives, according to Leites, explain Russian intellectual character. These are a preoccupation with death and latent passive homosexual impulses. The Russian intellectual displayed a fascination with death that is terrifying to the Bolshevik. Against that fascination, the Bolshevik defense is to minimize death by work and, more important, to express a kind of personal omnipotence through the dissolution of the self into the all-embracing, undying party. Thus, Leites writes, "the earlier Russian feeling that life is empty because of death has been replaced by the Bolshevik feel-

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ing that death is empty and small and unable to interfere with life."

The code of work becomes all-important. Krupskaya, Lenin's wife, tells of the time in exile when Lenin was absorbed for hours in playing chess. "On his return to Russia Vladimir Ilyich abandoned chess-playing. 'Chess gets hold of you too much, and hinders work . . .' [he said]. From his early youth," she continues, "Vladimir Ilyich was capable of giving up whatever activity hindered his main work." In exile, many political refugees went often to the cinema, while others, scorning this mode of enjoyment, preferred to take physical exercise in walking. The group divided, said Krupskaya, into cinemists and anti-cinemists who were jokingly called anti-Semites. "Volodya," wrote Krupskaya to Lenin's mother, "is a decided anti-cinemist and a fierce walker."

The theme of latent homosexuality, lying deep in the arcanum of psychoanalysis, is seen as a pervasive yet repressed element of Russian intellectual desire. In Dostoevsky, the utmost demonstration of emotion by the usually overwrought and emotionally charged characters is to embrace and clasp each other. To Bolshevism, the fantasy of men embracing each other is repulsive and frightening. When Lenin described those once close to him who had now made common cause with his enemies, he would say that they "kissed" and "embraced" each other. ("The Scheidemannites kiss and embrace Kautsky."—"The followers of Bernstein are impudently blowing kisses to [Plekhanov].")

To Leites, a further significant clue is in the number of Lenin's intimate friendships which ended in violent ruptures. These include Struve, a close collaborator in the 1890's; Potresev, an early *Iskra* associate; Plekhanov, Lenin's "ambivalently loved master" who "capitulated" to the Mensheviks; Aleksinsky, perhaps Lenin's most intimate associate in the years after 1905, who later denounced him as a German agent; and Malinovsky, the Bolshevik whip in the Duma, of whom Lenin said, "he will not be another Aleksinsky," and who turned out to be a police agent.

"One might speculate," says Leites, "—the data discussed here allow no more than that—whether the Bolshevik insistence on, in effect, killing enemies and being killed by them is not in part an effort to ward off fear-laden and guilty wishes to embrace men and be embraced by them. This hypothesis is consistent with the existence of certain pervasive Bolshevik trends described in this study: the fear of being passive, the fear of being controlled and used, the fear of wanting to submit to an attack. Once one denies one's wish to kiss by affirming one's wish to kill, this is apt to reinforce one's belief in the enemy's wish to kill by virtue of the mechanism of projection, probably heavily used by the Bolsheviks."

On the basis of what documentation can one make such sweeping inferences? Even if we fully accept the psychoanalytic theories, how does one validate these judgments without putting the Bolshevik leaders on the couch, so to speak? Leites's method is to examine the imagery, fantasy, and characteristic literary metaphors employed by Bolshevik leaders, and the fictional models in Russian literature with which the Bolsheviks identify, or those they assail. Russian literature, and the Russian's attitude to it, seems to make this possible. In few cultures do fictional characters become such sharply defined national types: Dostoevsky's gallery—the Karamazovs, Raskolnikov, Myshkin, Verkhovensky; Turgeniev's Rudin, Gogol's Chichikov, Goncharov's Oblomov, Chekhov's multifarious characters—are models who are accepted or rejected by Russians as psychological masks. (Less easily and much less intensely and completely we accept or reject Hemingway's characters, Fitzgerald's youths, the cowboy, Huck Finn, the gangster, Horatio Alger's heroes, as American types, bodying forth aspects of our national character.) The Bolsheviks, as Leites points out, cite these types in their own speech and homiletics with great frequency and emphasis (e.g., "Oblomovism" as a disease the party must avoid).

In addition to these literary sources, Leites draws on Freudian theory to highlight the latent meanings of specific imagery. For example, fear of impotence, fear of being beaten (in Stalin's famous speech to the managers of Soviet industry in 1931, the image of beating or being beaten occurs eleven times in a single paragraph), fear of contamination, of embraces, of annihilation, jokes about "cleaning out" the party, fear of being used as a "tail," etc.

As chief evidence for his theories Leites relies on the marshaling of images, in a vast profusion. The result is a strange and fascinating medley of quotations—roughly three thousand quotations cited for various points.

This method of analysis immediately provokes a charge of "reductivism," namely, that

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all ideas are seen as being "really" something more primitive. Thus, Lenin's fierce attack on solipsism is seen as expressing panic about annihilation, while his attack on the "spontaneity of the masses" is seen as a defense against desires for impulsive, orgiastic gratification. In what sense, one may ask, is the primitive impulse behind an idea more "real" than the idea itself?

This is a difficulty one encounters in much psychoanalytic thinking. It is true that the psychological impulse behind an idea is no test of its truth; the test of truth comes *after* the idea has originated. Yet we have learned not to scoff at these hidden mainsprings, for we are dealing less with the ideas than the way in which they are held and used. What Leites is arguing is that any view held with stubbornness, exaggeration, and intensity—as all Communist views are held—and which violently rejects all rational tests, raises the presumption that it may constitute a defense against strong unconscious wishes or fears which stand in contradiction to the idea. To follow a pronouncedly masculine profession like soldiering does not label a man as a "latent homosexual"; but if we find him compulsively, violently, and beyond reason insisting on his military postures, "common sense" permits us to suspect that he may be afraid of being less a man than he would like to appear. Again, this does not mean he may not be a good soldier; and the possibility that the Bolshevik stance may express a fear of passivity does not lead one to conclude that the Bolsheviks are "really" passive—obviously quite the contrary, they are dangerously aggressive. But a knowledge of the springs of their aggressions might conceivably help us to deal with them.

III

GRANTING, however, the validity of the psychoanalytic method in the study of personality, we must still ask whether it can legitimately be extended into the analysis of politics.

Erich Fromm has argued, in *Escape from Freedom,* that the sado-masochistic character, typical of the German middle class, found an outlet in the Nazi party. T. W. Adorno and his associate authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* have pointed to the rigid, compulsive individuals who seek authoritarian values. Harold Lasswell in the early *Psychopathology and Politics* sought to show how the political arena acts as a displacement of personal needs. (For example, adolescents, guilty about sex strivings, find sublimation in the generalized "love" appeal of political movements that emphasize brotherhood.) In these studies, characteristic of modern social science, the social structure is taken as fundamental and the personality components are seen as the responses.*

Leites's view, however, goes beyond this. It says, in effect, that *character determines politics.* Since the mainspring of Bolshevism is action, the movement, by impressing its character on others, transforms all politics and, in the end, the social structure itself as well. (Compare the purposeful Bolshevik-type organization with interest-group parties, or tepid ideological parties, to see the difference.) Bolshevism, in this sense, can be considered as one of the few successful movements of pure will in history; its only competitors in this respect are certain religious orders.

Because, in modern life, ideas (abstract, philosophical conceptions of truth) have become transformed into ideologies (active strivings to implement a creed as truth), Leites's type of analysis is possible, reflecting as it does social reality. For ideologies are, in effect, attempts to unite ideas, behavior, and character. The Communist (or the fascist, or the kibbutznik, or the 100 per cent American) is not only supposed to believe certain things, and not only supposed to do certain things: he is supposed to *be* something.† If one is "serious," one "lives" one's ideology. Thus ideology may be said to presuppose character.

*The effort to construct "social character" out of unconscious strivings is not limited to psychoanalysis. It is central, for example, to Pareto's sociology. For Pareto, the springs of social action were "interests" (or rational assessments), "derivations" (or rationalizations), and "residues" (or fundamental drives). Different people are characterized by different "combinations of residues." As George Homans, an early follower of Pareto, writes: "American historians are given to discussing at length the 'Pioneer character,' the 'Pioneer spirit.' What they are talking about when they are simply not romancing is the prominence in the 'pioneers' of certain residues, notably those of the integrity of the individual."

†This helps to explain the narrow intensity with which a few ex-Communists have come to regard the problem of Communism. Though free of Communism, they are not free of ideology, and having once understood that a commitment to Communism demands a rigidly defined personal character, they now tend to believe that "real" anti-Communism demands an equally rigid personality pattern.

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But again, what basically determines character? The standard socialist and utopian answer, as given, say, by Robert Owen in his *New View of Society* or by Edward Bellamy in *Looking Backward,* was that environment bred character: e.g., the rapacious nature of capitalism shaped the competitive character ("Withdraw those circumstances to create crime in the human character and crime will not be created," said Owen in a classic phrasing of the liberal belief); in the utopian society, where abundance prevailed, a different character would emerge.

What determined Bolshevik character? Leites in the present volume stops short of an answer to this question, possibly because the purpose of his book lies elsewhere—he is interested in describing the pattern of Bolshevik action, in order to develop a practical way of counteracting Communism. Whether his picture of this operational code is a true one is, he argues, independent of the origins of Bolshevik impulses. Formally he is correct, for the code's validity depends upon its internal consistency, upon its confirmation by other analysts using the same data, and finally on its usefulness in making predictions. Yet, intellectually the sources of that code remain interesting and important, for only by seeking to trace them can we have a complete model of social analysis.

The conventional answer regarding Bolshevik character is that the conspiratorial nature of the conditions of underground work in the days before the revolution—the environment—shaped the peculiar structure of the Bolshevik elite, and its unique code and discipline. But there were other parties, Marxist and social-revolutionary, which operated in the same environment. And the ideological debates between Lenin and Martov in 1903 on the nature of party membership antedated the development of "party work": Martov argued that a Social Democrat was one who sympathized generally with the party's program, while Lenin argued that only a professional revolutionary, only a conspirator, could be a party member. Thus the pattern was pre-figured in the thinking of Lenin. Leites, it seems to me, would be forced to argue that the Bolshevik pattern was a product of will. Further, if consistent with the psychoanalytic approach, he would have to argue that it was the character of Lenin, the "primal father," which shaped the party (his followers did call themselves Leninists) rather than the party organization and the environment which shaped Lenin and the other Bolsheviks. And it was the will of Lenin alone which turned the party's politics, as in the crucial decisions in April and July 1917.

The Bolshevik party has, more than any other party in history, demonstrated the nature of will. It was, and is, one of the most highly self-conscious movements in history. Its patristic writings are not only canonical, they are "training documents" in the tempering of a "hard core" party membership. Individuals may join from a variety of motives, but all must be stamped in the mold or driven out. "The Narodniks," Lenin jibed, "are more united . . . and with them the abundance of grouplets is not accompanied by sharp splits . . . [yet] the Narodniks are politically impotent . . . incapable of carrying through any political mass action . . . [while] the dogmatic 'Marxists' who have an endless number of splits . . . are successfully active." The splits and expulsions (becoming blood purges after power is achieved) which characterize Communist parties may thus be seen as a process of personality selection: the true Bolshevik is the man who remains.

If we can sum up the argument schematically: Bolshevik character is a reaction, consciously and unconsciously, to elements in the Russian intellectual character. This is seen most characteristically in the person of Lenin and his emotional and intellectual temper. In Lenin's mold the party became stamped.*

IV

With the Leites study we come full circle in the theories of history and politics. It was the fashion a hundred years ago to ascribe historical change to the "great men" and the force of their personalities. Subsequently we interpreted history in terms of abstract "social forces"—population pressure, search for markets, etc.—which somehow, but never fully understandably, translated themselves through individual actors into tangible events. The glaring inadequacies of these deterministic theories has led to the reintroduction of psychological and, through Freudian influence, characterological

*Leites has elaborated his view in a subsequent volume, *Ritual of Liquidation* (The Free Press, 1954), to explain the Moscow Trials of the late 30's. His view, briefly, is that the old Bolsheviks were caught, psychologically, in the wheel of their own logic, and, being beaten, fatalistically confessed.

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explanations. Even ex-Marxists have not been immune. Is not the current fashionable theory of the "primacy of politics" over economic forces simply a smuggled-in psychological theory of "power"? Most attempts to explain the situation in Russia today find expression in the "power" formula.

But actually, the formula of "power" explains little. It tells nothing about different tactics, different social groups, the different purposes for which power will be used. If a psychological theory of politics is to be employed, then the Leites view—with its emphasis on character as blending a power drive with ideology—is, in spite of all its limitations and uncertainties, a far more subtle and imaginative view than the contraband psychology of the political scientists.

However, two questions remain to be asked: how are continuities of character established, and how, and with what difficulties, does an elite group impress its character upon a country?

In the Leites model, as we have seen, there is the implication that the initial change—the emergence of Bolshevism—was a reaction formation, and that the character of the "primal father" determined its political course. If that was true of Lenin, how does it apply to Stalin, and to his heirs? In his study of *Hamlet,* Ernest Jones remarks that there are two kinds of sons: those who reject their fathers, and those who take over and internalize the essential characteristics of the father, often caricaturing his features in the process. From this point of view, Stalin was the son who took over the lineaments of the father. The touches, however, were grosser. Where in Lenin's time it was the party that had the monopoly on foresight, under Stalin it became a group within the party, and eventually the Leader alone, in whom all wisdom resided. Devices once reserved for the enemy—particularly deception and terror—were exercised on the masses which the party claimed to represent, and later against rivals within the party itself. Lenin had opposed personal touchiness and insisted on the irrelevance of personal prestige; Stalinism reacted intensely to minor slights, but only after giving them a political interpretation. Lenin opposed bragging; the Stalinist regime went in for the greatest self-glorification in history. Lenin opposed the creation of "scandals" in the party; Stalin liquidated the party cadres under the most fantastic charges.

These changes in Bolshevik behavior do not necessarily reflect changes in the unconscious wishes and fears which Leites posits as the ultimate sources of the Bolshevik character. Psychological defense patterns may change—indeed, they often *must* change as older defenses become inadequate. But when such changes take place on a broad political scale, they become extremely important, and we are bound to ask why the changes have occurred, why these particular changes, and what further changes are likely to occur. Here Leites offers little assistance. His theory deals with the dynamics of Bolshevism in the process of its formation, but once Bolshevism has come to birth, the model, as he presents it, is static. Take, for example, the "odd" neglect of Stalin's memory by Malenkov and company. One could say that they, in turn, represent a reaction to the overbearing, almost paranoid Stalin, or because of the peculiar balance of power, they have returned to the "looser" structure of Leninism. But we have no guide *in the model itself* to the possibility or the nature of the change.

THE static quality of the model comes in part from its methodology. The basic outlines of Bolshevik character are drawn not from the empirical world of action but from the abstract canons of Bolshevik doctrine. In itself this is not too great a fault, since the doctrine itself is evident. The greater fault of the theory —and paradoxically its strength—lies in the fact that, starting from static doctrine, it posits a static force called "character" and then gathers all human action into that one hedgehog force. How often in social action does character or will actually impose itself on events? People live largely in social systems, and they are "chained" to one another in complex ways. All of us, no doubt, would like to impose our "character" on the world, but in practice we find ourselves forced to modify our demands to conform to the possibilities. Leites may thus be claimed to have given his concept of "character" a false autonomy, and in applying this concept to politics—which is *par excellence* a phenomenon of change and interaction—to have falsified the nature of his subject. Again, this objection does not invalidate Leites's analysis; it only points to its necessary limitations. Leites tries to tell us, in short, what the Communists want to do. We need to know also what they *can* do. It may be useful to deal briefly with a few recent books which attempt, from various standpoints, to deal with the question of the limited alternatives open to the Communists.

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THERE is a general consensus among Soviet experts that the Stalinist regime went as far as it could go, if it did not overreach itself, in the use of power and terror to keep the society moving, and that the new rulers of Russia face a deep dilemma.

Isaac Deutscher, a pundit favored by some liberal publications, presents a traditional Marxist view. In his books—most explicitly in *Russia, What Next?*—Deutscher sketches a theory of Soviet development based on the proposition that the level of productive power acts as a constraint on the possibilities of action. In a veiled, backhand defense of Stalinist "necessity," he concludes that with the progress achieved in the 1950's, the Stalinist terrorism and primitive magic had outlived their "usefulness" and were coming into conflict with the "new needs of Soviet society." Industrialization, says Deutscher, "tends to awaken the democratic aspirations of the masses," while the "phenomenal growth of Soviet wealth . . . tends to soften [class privileges], and the orthodoxy, the iron curtain and the elaborate mythology of Stalinism tend to become socially useless. . . . Stalinism is untenable in this expanding society at its present level of productive forces."

We may, in this context, pass briefly over Deutscher's blithe optimism. It is highly debatable whether industrialization leads to a striving for freedom, or whether the expansion of wealth tends to diminish class privileges; relative scarcities are bound to exist for a long period in the Soviet Union and the congealing of class privileges may become the real brake on any relaxation of the dictatorship, although key social groups at the top may win a measure of security. As a scheme for analysis, however, there is in Deutscher's approach a clearly determinable sense (whether substantively right or wrong) of a mainspring of change, and thus it focuses attention on the key question of social theory—the sources of change in social systems.

One need not accept the stilted Marxist notion of "level of productive forces" to know that a society generates different bureaucratic groups (plant managers, state planners and bureaucrats, party controllers, army, secret police, etc.) who have different images of accomplishments, different notions of social priorities, different power drives and opportunities, all of which are bound to generate various antagonisms. Moreover, every society demands, after a while, a pattern of stable expectations within which careers can be planned, children raised, personal and social defenses and adaptations set up—in short, a sense of a future. Can Soviet society settle down?

Professor Merle Fainsod of Harvard in his *How Russia Is Ruled* (Harvard University Press), focusing on the internal strains, sees two possible choices: a continuation of control from the top down, or else the diffusion of power among rival elites and the gradual emergence of some type of constitutional order. Pessimistic about the ability of the regime to relax controls, Fainsod sees no fundamental changes in the near future.

Professor W. W. Rostow of M.I.T., synthesizing the work of many Russian scholars, comes to a more "optimistic" conclusion in his *The Dynamics of Soviet Society* (Norton). The struggle for succession, he argues, will force the claimants to mobilize popular support from different elite groups, but the lack of a mechanism to adjudicate conflicting dissatisfactions and aspirations may result in political confusion which will hobble, and even topple, the Soviet regime.

THE nature of the limited alternatives is also the subject of Barrington Moore's excellent book *Terror and Progress* (Harvard University Press). In Soviet society, Moore points out, the range of social alternatives is very limited. In the basic problems of allocations (what is to be produced, how much is to be consumed, what incentives are to be employed) decisions are made by three criteria: power, rationality, tradition. But any one solution limits the range of workable alternatives for the solution of other problems. Thus, rationality emphasizes technical competence as the criterion for employment. But the requirements of power demand that jobs go to the faithful, to the commissar rather than the manager, while purges, the most drastic expression of power, are necessary to remind individuals that obedience is the first law of the Soviet system. Traditionalism, the following of established routine, has been the "natural" mode of the peasantry, if not *sub rosa* of large sections of Soviet industry, and stands as a constant hindrance to the application of the other criteria.

The criteria of power, says Moore, have probably gone too far. In a totalitarian state, the power of the dictator to intervene arbitrarily at any point in the administrative hier-

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archy creates a level of insecurity which an ongoing system may find difficult to maintain. The choice now, Moore feels, lies between "creeping rationality" and traditionalism, or some combination of both. Since the Soviet Union is intent on industrialization, the rationalizing elements are likely to become more deeply embodied in the society: this would mean that technical criteria would replace political decisions, jobs would be allocated according to skill, career expectations would have a higher degree of stability, family privileges could be passed on to children. In turn the power and prestige of the industrial manager, the engineer, and the technician would rise, and the share in power and prestige held by the "control" apparatus, the party and secret police, would decline. An alternative—or parallel—evolution of Soviet society in a traditionalist direction, which Moore finds "somewhat more plausible," would mean that the party and military elements would retain control, but arbitrary intervention would diminish as personal cliques and machines within the bureaucracy become the focal point of loyalties. Such a development would also imply a rise in local autonomy and a resistance to innovation and change.

For the Soviet rulers, then, choices are rather narrow. They cannot permit the free play of interests without wrecking the society; "to keep themselves in power they must maintain a delicate balance between . . . security and insecurity, legality and arbitrariness, [and] they must somehow prevent the paralysis of traditionalism by maintaining the same kind of balance between custom and innovation, routine and initiative."

THERE are, then, other methods than Leites's of trying to predict the behavior of world Communism, both within the Communist countries and in relation to the free world. The singular difference is that these authors (Deutscher, Fainsod, Rostow, Moore) see politics in rational terms, on the basis of rational alternatives. Leites is interested primarily in the emotional components—largely unconscious—of Bolshevistic feeling as a clue to Bolshevik behavior. All these approaches have their validity, though the problem is how to meld them.

But there is one more large variable which these theories, in the nature of things, cannot adequately take into account: the behavior of the free world, which is the most important "reality factor" limiting the freedom of action of the Communist leaders. Here the role of social science becomes characteristically ambiguous, for these volumes are designed to affect the behavior of the free world in its opposition to Communism, but in so doing we risk the danger of self-confirming hypotheses whereby we, because of our judgment of how the Communists may be expected to act, might adopt policies forcing them to confirm or negate that judgment. This is always a danger, but we minimize it if we remember that no matter how far our social science sophistication has come, it cannot take the place of that practical flexibility which is demanded by an awareness of the limitations of our knowledge.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Europe's State of Mind

[*We share with our readers this paragraph from a private letter just received from a valued contributor, writing from Europe in explanation of why he was unable at this juncture to write a political article that we had requested.*—Ed.]

. . . I will confess something more to you: Since I have to keep silent in any case for some time [because of another literary commitment], this is as good a time as any for silence. There is no controversy being aired here about which I feel strongly, no serious menace and no promising perspective, neither Europe nor the cold war; Mendès-France is not even disquieting any more (after all, what was all the fuss about him? And why distrust him any more? Now that everybody distrusts him, he has become as reliable as a French politician can be). This is an era of co-existence, we can't do anything about it. I have just read the recent essay by George Kennan on "The North Wind and the Sun" (I am not sure if I retranslate the words exactly, but you know what I am speaking about: since the north wind has failed to make the Russians take their coat off, let's try warm sunshine). As the Russians came to exactly the same conclusion two years ago, and have been acting on it very successfully since, there is now sunshine everywhere—a sunshine competition between Mr. Eisenhower and Malenkov. I am sure that as long as *they* do not start the north wind to blowing again, nobody will. And I am afraid that if and when they do, the next blow will find us not only without our coat, but down to our underpants. But it is useless to tell people that there are still dangers and pitfalls ahead; everybody knows it, but (except for some professionals) nobody wants to hear about it any more, everybody is fed up and utterly bored. If you want to be sure that an article or a publication will not be read, put "Cold War" or "Russian Danger" or "Communist Conspiracy" in the title. Maybe this is not yet the mood in New York, but certainly it is here. There is still some wild talk about European Union, or rearmament pools, or disarmament, or German reunification, but it is talk for talk's sake, because political writers and speakers have to talk about something, even if their only thought is "no change" so long as the Russians do not stop the sunshine competition—and why should they? It is a big success—it will go on, and for the time being everybody is happy about it. This is no time of decision, at least not in these quarters—maybe, to find a place where big things are happening one would have to go to Bandung, next April. In Europe there is stalemate, sunshine, and prosperity. For the time being I am not greatly interested in politics. . . .

[NAME WITHHELD]

Somewhere in Europe

Law and Hospitality

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

There are several observations I would like to add to Charles Abrams' illuminating article ". . . Only the Very Best Christian Clientele" (January). Mr. Abrams contends that vigorous legal action may help close the yawning gap between the vulgar practices of discrimination and official public policy toward them. At least this can be done, he believes, in the nineteen states which have already enacted anti-discrimination laws.

Mr. Abrams, however, does not discuss the serious difficulties in the way of finding enduring solutions through law enforcement. A major weakness in most prohibitory legislation is its underlying conception of discrimination as a *crime*. Most of the statutes were enacted in the late 19th century, following the adoption of the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution. Criminal prosecution was provided as a remedy in all nineteen states. But the laws have not been enforced consistently largely because juries—understandably—will simply not return verdicts which may send people to jail for failing to provide accommodations at a vacation resort. The "crime" does not seem to justify so severe a punishment. There have been only two successful prosecutions in New York in the 60-odd years since the law was enacted. Many states also provide the added remedy of permitting claims for damages to be filed by the injured party. But this, too, has not been effective; most victims of discrimination find litigation time-consuming and costly. . . .

More sensible and potentially more useful

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laws establishing commissions against discrimination have been passed in five states. These modern laws reach the incident and the offender without a formal trial; they make it possible, through a rational and conciliatory approach, to obtain a pledge by the hotel owner against future discrimination. The commissions against discrimination cannot take action, to be sure, until a formal complaint has been filed by an injured party. But Governor Harriman of New York, in whose administration Mr. Abrams now serves, has proposed legislation giving authority to the State Commission to *initiate* investigation into discriminatory practices without having to wait upon a private complaint. . . .

But law at its best can only be a start toward reaching enduring solutions. We should err grievously if we thought that it is the resort owner's attitude alone which requires modification. His policy is determined, often commanded, by the attitude of the clientele to whom he caters. When resort literature mentions "nearby churches" or "Jewish cuisine," the resort owner is seeking to reach prospective guests who respond to this kind of information.

We are confronted, therefore, with the need to modify the attitudes of a large section of the public. Some *sense* of hospitality—or, at least, a willingness to accept others on the part of the resort- and hotel-visiting public—is essential. Favorably circumstanced contact between groups (as at resorts and places of recreation) generally helps modify hostile attitudes. Another important way of modifying attitudes is through the full use of educational media designed to reach public opinion generally, as well as the resort and hotel trade.

Reliance on law alone would be illusory. Many states, for example, prepare attractive brochures on their vacation spots and facilities —these and other materials can also be used as a means for encouraging a more hospitable public opinion. Community organizations concerned with improving group relations also play an important role, negotiating and conferring to produce an "indifference to irrelevant differences," and otherwise creating the social situations in which wholesome contacts are stimulated. My point is that change, depending as it does upon a maturing public attitude, can be accelerated appreciably by community as well as governmental action. The government and community acting together, with the support of realistic statutes providing full commission powers, can hasten considerably the necessary process of accommodation of differences leading to the creation of a more hospitable spirit than the one currently prevailing.

EDWIN J. LUKAS

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Discrimination is a reprehensible social practice, but I wonder if in its trivial manifestations, like the uppityness of certain resorts, it deserves to be taken as seriously as Charles Abrams does. Mr. Abrams thinks these places should abandon their clannishness, if only to accommodate the "many people who find homogeneity a bore." Evidently, however, there are also a great many who will rather endure boredom than heterogeneity—particularly during their vacations. Why insist on spoiling their fun, when there are plenty of mixed resorts! . . .

It would probably be a great source of additional pleasure to the snobs and climbers among our co-religionists if the gates of those embattled and hitherto inaccessible enclaves would open for them, but Jewish organizations, in my opinion, can find more worthwhile causes to devote their energy to than shattering the barriers of the "select-clientele" resorts. . . .

J. S. OESTREICHER

Bronx, New York

McCarthyphobia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Since it began, the cult of McCarthyphobia has been neatly co-terminous with the large group of self-regimented Americans who claim the label of liberal. During five years the cultists have produced and devoured a body of revelation so vast that to give it an adequate survey would require more wordage than there is room to print or time to read. So COMMENTARY has done a considerable public service by bringing us Mr. James Rorty's "What Price McCarthy Now?" (January). Doubtless unwittingly, he has composed a marvelously faithful scale model of the whole literature.

Here in a compass one can traverse between dinner and bedtime are all the techniques of the McCarthyphobe dialectic: the dainty invective; the conclusion foregone; the question passionately begged; the bland inconsistency, the naive *non sequitur;* the guilt by association-by-association. . . .

Here in a mere five and one-half pages Mr. Rorty has called Mr. McCarthy a "monster," "the shabbiest demagogue," "all too inhuman," "a kind of monstrous political robot," the victim of "a kind of mad glandular logic." Mr. Rorty has remarked the Senator's "demagogic nihilism," his "splenetic attack," "his nature primitive, or distorted," his "prompt and savage response." His supporters boo "with startling ferocity," and "applaud deliriously."

This is rational?

Ah, yes. It is when intemperate words (or for that matter temperate ones) are used of

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Communists and their ilk, that the cultists demand a showing, of the protagonist. But what liberal worthy of his ADA pin ever offered or required proof of any derogation of the Senator? Applied to him, these delicate characterizations are reciprocally probative: he is each of them, because he is all the others. . . .

Mr. Rorty tells us *as though there were something wrong* about it that Major Williams left the Marines in 1940 and that Major Jordan accused Harry Hopkins of folly. I never saw Al Williams in my life. I don't know whether he resigned because of dandruff, duodenal ulcers, or a distaste for battle. If Mr. Rorty does know, he ought to come out like a man and tell us, or else not drag the matter up at all. Whether Major Jordan presented a true bill I am not here trying to say. What I want to know from Mr. Rorty is what edict has established the inviolability of the public record? Where does he get the *crime* of *lèse Hopkins*? . . .

It is reported, says Mr. Rorty, that President Eisenhower will soon remove all doubts about his candidacy in 1956. Here in Washington are about a thousand newspaper men and twice as many lobbyists, one of whom brings forth some such "report" every two hours. . . .

Mr. Rorty derides the McCarthy faction because *only* 2,287,143 people signed their petitions. Their drive was a flop? But later on (p. 35) they are still "inundated by a continuing deluge" of signatures. Was it a flop, or not?

Mr. Rorty frowns on the generals who (like Washington, Jackson, Grant, and Eisenhower) "violated the tradition that has ordinarily deterred American military men from engaging in politics." Next page he remarks without a gulp that the nice CEC is headed by *General* Telford Taylor.

Mr. Rorty is displeased that Senator McCarthy attacked Mr. Eisenhower, violently indeed, for not performing as McCarthy claims he promised. Had Mr. Rorty a hard word for Senator Morse, who accused Mr. Eisenhower of precisely the same thing in 1952 and again on TV as lately as last month?

Mr. Rorty punctiliously concedes that Admiral Crommelin "never exhibited anti-Semitic tendencies." Then he slyly gives the lie to his own candor by setting out at some length the activities *in other enterprises* of certain of Admiral Crommelin's co-sponsors *of this enterprise.*

Mr. Rorty reports that the sponsors of the pro-McCarthy meeting were men of "earned prestige and high personal integrity." They were "at some pains to keep their meeting as respectable and all American as possible" and they "tried to keep out known anti-Semitic . . . crackpots and fanatics." But for Mr. Rorty's purposes anti-Semitic they must be made out, and so he gets anti-Semitic banners into his report by recalling he saw them in the same hall 15 years ago. (Come to think of it, Mr. Rorty himself has been keeping some mighty unsavory company!) **This is a powerful device,** and if practicing character assassins generally adopt it, the Garden is through as a meeting place. . . .

Finally, it is clear that Mr. Rorty *could have written* a really penetrating analysis of third party prospects *vis à vis* the McCarthy faction, had not the lure of McCarthyphobia proved too much for him. It is a pity.

I agree with Senator McCarthy and his supporters, and with Mr. Rorty, that Senator McCarthy is not important. But the large faction for whom Mr. Rorty speaks is important.

The cult itself, and *its methods,* as here demonstrated by Mr. Rorty, are a great pity. As my grandfather, when he was sheriff of Twiggs County, Ga., three quarters of a century ago, observed to a group of men who were of a mind to use violence against a prisoner: "What this fellow is accused of, if he did it, shows the kind of a man he is. What you folks are proposing to do shows the kind of people you are."

Not a clever cult, and not a brave one!

DILLARD STOKES

Washington, D. C.

A Venture in Real Estate

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Charles Reznikoff's "A Gallery of Jewish Colonial Worthies" (December, January) alludes to, but strangely ignores, the major role many of these notables apparently played in one of the most ambitious speculations in land this country has ever witnessed.

A bare outline of the venture is set forth in the reporter's statement preceding Chief Justice Marshall's classic opinion in the case of *Johnson and Graham's Lessee* v. *William M'Intosh,* 8 Wheat. 543 (1823). According to that report, on July 5, 1773, "William Murray, of the Illinois country, merchant, acting for himself and for Moses Franks and Jacob Franks, of London, in Great Britain, David Franks, John Inglis, Bernard Gratz, Michael Gratz, Alexander Ross, David Sproat and James Milligan, all of Philadelphia, in the province of Pennsylvania; Moses Franks, Andrew Hamilton, William Hamilton and Edward Milne, of the same place; Joseph Simons, otherwise called Joseph Simon, and Levi Andrew Levi, of the town of Lancaster, in Pennsylvania; Thomas Minshall, of York county, in the same province; Robert Callender and William

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Thompson, of Cumberland County, in the same province; John Campbell, of Pittsburg, in the same province; and George Castles and James Ramsay, of the Illinois country" bought two tracts of land (comprising over ten million acres) east of the Mississippi River and north of the Ohio River from the Illinois Tribes of Indians for $24,000, or approximately one-quarter of a cent per acre.

Unfortunately for them, these speculators failed to take into account the principle of law, followed in theory then, as now, by all Western nations, that Indian title may be extinguished only by the sovereign, and not by private entrepreneurs. Consequently for decades the proprietors of the Illinois Land Company found it necessary to importune Congress either to recognize the validity of their purchase or to make a "compromise" settlement of their claims. Congress denied each of these petitions in its entirety.

By the Treaties of August 13, 1803 and December 30, 1805 (7 Stat. 78 and 100, respectively), the United States acquired much of the same land from the same Illinois Indian tribes for an equally ludicrous consideration, about one-eighth of a cent per acre, and shortly thereafter began selling small tracts therein to settlers for prices ranging up to $2 per acre. As might be expected, an individual claiming title under the Land Company's "deed" eventually sued an individual claiming title under a grant from the government for possession of a particular tract. In the opinion referred to above, Chief Justice Marshall finally declared: "After bestowing on this subject a degree of attention which was more required by the magnitude of the interest in litigation, and the able and elaborate arguments of the bar, than by its intrinsic difficulty, the court is decidedly of the opinion that the plaintiffs do not exhibit a title which can be sustained in the courts of the United States."

A fifty-year-old dream of empire in the West thus was buried for all time.

ARTHUR LAZARUS, JR.

Washington, D. C.

Pupil and Master

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

David Baumgardt's "Maimonides: Religion as Poetic Truth" (November 1954), brought me back to the time of his brilliant teaching at Berlin University when I was his pupil in ancient philosophy. But as he states himself, it would be "small gratitude to one's teacher to want to be nothing but his pupil," and it is out of respect for the master that I demur at some of his conclusions. He is right when he declares that our traditional religious poetry is a more adequate expression of the sphere of holiness than the most ingenious definitions of God's attributes—"*Spricht* die Seele, ach! so spricht *die Seele* nicht mehr." It was not until Schleiermacher that religion was conceived as a spiritual experience *sui generis*. But Maimonides, although rationalist, doesn't deny the authority of poetic and even anthropomorphic language. He only warns against a literal acceptance of Biblical anthropomorphism, and, on the other side, while he explains the philosophical meaning of the Biblical vocabulary, he defends it against superficial criticism and stresses the authority of our prophets' message.

(Dr.) CH. C. LEHRMANN

Grand Rabbinat du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg

Luxembourg

The Dolphin House (Cont'd)

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In view of the remarks in the letter of Mr. L. Wagenaar of Jerusalem (January) on the subject of the Dolphin House Hotel and Country Club, I feel obliged to make the following observations. . . .

No one who operates a resort hotel or similar enterprise objects to publicity. When I wrote my letter to you, however, following my having read Morris Freedman's articles on Grossinger's (July and August 1954), I had no intention or expectation that it should be published. . . .

This would have closed the matter were it not for Mr. Wagenaar's misunderstanding of our establishment's position. Not satisfied with the motive of my previous letter, he goes further to point out that, in one vital respect, the Dolphin House differs from Grossinger's. In picturesque language, he states that the Dolphin is "strictly and guaranteed—*treif*."

This must surely give a false impression of the hotel situation in Israel, and particularly of the Dolphin. As Chairman of the Tourist Committee of the Israel Hotel Association, and as a member of the Israel Government Tourist Center, may I mention that of the ten luxury class hotels in Israel, six are kosher and four are not. Statistics show that not more than five per cent of visiting tourists (to say nothing of the Israelis) make a specific issue of *kashrut*. Nevertheless, no bacon or ham would be served, or anything done to upset the traditional feeling of our guests. On several occasions, special arrangements are made for kosher facilities for groups and individuals, as when the President of Israel, Mr. Ben Zvi, spent his summer vacation at the Dolphin in 1953.

The Israel hotel industry is in a position to

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cater to all sections of the Jewish community, according to taste and the best traditions of our people.

NORMAN LOURIE

Dolphin House
Shavei Zion, Israel

Self-Segregation and Judaism

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Whether your correspondent (Deborah Dorfman, January 1955) is describing her real situation or is writing with tongue in cheek, it seems to me that she does point up a tragic dilemma of many Jewish parents—and admits herself defeated. These parents "lost their religious beliefs before finishing college." They have more in common with their fellow liberal intellectuals among Gentiles than with the average Jew. They honestly tell their children of their lack of Jewish identification. Then they send their children to Jewish religious schools, join Jewish organizations, lead social lives almost entirely among Jews. They do not know why and are bitterly worried about "segregation."

Does not your correspondent show that for most of us some kind of "segregation" is a sociological fact, which even those well-equipped cannot escape? Does not your correspondent clearly, if plaintively, show that we are a "peculiar people"?

This being so, would it not be advisable for us to reexamine the historical basis for our peculiarity? Would we not find that it is inseparably bound up with a peculiar understanding of man and God and their relations? With a vast system of responses made to life's problems within a peculiar framework—Judaism?

IF, IN some way, we are segregated, it seems to me that we have two choices. One, we can accept the fact more or less resignedly and stagnate within our "social ghettos," imitating the desirable but unattainable "integrated"—i.e., non-Jewish—world. We send our children—*faute de mieux*—to Sunday school to learn of their historical background and to help them with their social integration into (at least) the Jewish community. Since we lost our religious beliefs before finishing college, we do not, of course, want our children instructed in the outmoded superstitions of "religion."

Or, two, we might recognize that we belong to a group that had conceived of itself as divinely ordered to be holy. We might recognize that we are the result, even today, of a historical process deliberately and consciously instigated and carried on by our leaders in the past. We might then question whether "our religious beliefs before we finished college" had much in common with those responses to life, that Judaism which—to the mystification of sociologists and historians—has kept us alive to this day. . . .

I feel certain that your correspondent would not reject in "politics, literature, the theater, and other 'intellectual' pursuits" anything she has not tried to understand and appreciate as a mature person. Only in regard to Judaism, tied up in her mind with emotional, negative (and non-existent) stereotypes of "the average Jew" (canasta and Florida), does she base her judgment on what is essentially an adolescent reaction.

She does not know Judaism's intellectual sophistication or its emotional satisfactions. . . .

WALTER HARTMANN

Silver Spring, Maryland

The Anglo-Saxons

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I have been a more or less constant reader of COMMENTARY for many years. I have often disagreed with many things included therein, but never have I come across a piece of writing that was less deserving of publication in your magazine than "The Break," by Dan Jacobson (October 1954). . . .

AS A picture of a kibbutz it is entirely and patently false, and indeed slanderous of one of the finest movements in contemporary Jewish social life. . . . "The Break," far from being a condemnation of kibbutz society . . . instead merely condemns those products of the Anglo-Saxon heritage who were so poisoned by the anarchy and chaos in the intellectual and cultural spheres, the rotting influence of material acquisition, that they must forever be doomed as a "Lost Generation," unable to find peace and contentment in their daily lives either in Paris, New York, or "Gesher Haziv". . . .

"The Break" is another albeit cruder example of the new trend among Anglo-Saxon Zionists, led by such illustrious figures as Maurice Samuel, who in his book *Level Sunlight* states that he will never consider full personal identification with Israel, because he writes in English and does not think it worth his while or even possible to learn Hebrew equally proficiently. . . . Arthur Koestler is perhaps the best example of the logical conclusion of this trend, from Zionist to the negation of Judaism. . . .

DOODY COHEN

Kibbutz Gal-on
Doan Na-Chaf Ascalon
Israel

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Judah L. Magnes

FOR ZION'S SAKE. A BIOGRAPHY OF JUDAH L. MAGNES. By NORMAN BENTWICH. The Jewish Publication Society of America. 329 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by JUDD L. TELLER

DR. JUDAH L. MAGNES'S years were spent in purposeful endeavors dedicated to the Jewish commonweal, and in the pursuit of several careers each of which brought him the esteem of his fellows, the companionship of learned and sensitive minds, and, in his younger years, the adulation of multitudes. He was, at various junctures of his public life, a leader of masses, almost a "rabble-rouser"; an advocate of elect, rather than elected, leadership (in the latter part of his tenure as head of the Kehillah); a relief worker; a university president and, simultaneously with this, an excursionist into the No Man's Land of international diplomacy. It is as the latter—the role in which he achieved least—that he is now best remembered, with affection and with enmity.

Obviously, Judah Magnes was a man of eccentric pattern. Each of his diverse careers was striking and bold in outline, but the outlines were never filled in. An air of tragedy, the sense of a life wasted despite devotion and dedication, despite much good brought to fellow men, seems to hover over this biography by Norman Bentwich, who was Magnes's close friend for many years. Frustration, disillusionment, renunciation marked his career from the very outset—underneath all the appearances of success.

He who raised funds for Jewish self-defense in Russia at the time of the Kishinev pogrom soon became a confirmed pacifist. He who from the pulpits of the richest temples spoke for the radical and Zionist "rabble" became in the end one who warned that the "compact majority" was a danger to orderly democracy. One of the first American-born orators of Zionism, he was to break with organized Zionism on the very eve of its first great triumph, the Balfour Declaration, and yet several years later to settle in Palestine, an act that constituted the ultimate in Zionist self-realization. He envisaged Jewish Palestine as a spiritual center for Jewry and took pride in "his" Hebrew University, which he hoped to make the hub of that center, yet he felt inadequate among the University's scientists, and in the end was divested, for serious as well as shabby reasons, of his previous virtually uncircumscribed authority on Mount Scopus.

How disappointed the pacifist Magnes must have been in both Mahatma Gandhi and himself when he felt impelled, in 1938, to question the latter's counsel to German Jews to offer non-violent resistance to "the godless fury of their de-humanized oppressors." Magnes's reply to this was: "If ever there could be a justifiable war in the name of and for humanity, a war against Germany, to prevent the wanton persecution of a whole race, would be completely justified. But I do not believe in any war." And when World War II broke out soon thereafter, Magnes, who had opposed World War I, wrote to James Marshall: "I have gone back on the deepest feeling that I have had, my pacifism, that is, the prohibition of spilling man's blood. . . . I do not know whether to be ashamed of my backsliding, or to be content that for the moment at least I am not pretending to be something I am not."

MR. BENTWICH reveals the personal torments of Magnes's life and the private sacrifices that he had to make. He never mastered Hebrew rhetoric and enunciation yet felt it inappropriate for the president of the Hebrew University to deliver his addresses in English. Therefore he spoke infrequently and only in Hebrew, thus renouncing, for the sake of propriety and consistency, his primary gift, the one that had brought him the greatest fulfillment—for he was among the most eloquent orators produced by the American Jewish pulpit.

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Magnes's restlessness is traced to its source in this sensitive biography: "He prepared himself ardently for the rabbinical calling," Mr. Bentwich writes, "and it remained his dearest aspiration to rouse the Jewish people to a truer understanding and fulfillment of their religious tradition. His other efforts were second-best. . . . But he knew early that he had not the divine spark, and all his efforts in life to attain it by study, by reading, by contemplation were in vain." Magnes himself wrote as late as 1938: "I am working for religious ends. This does not, however, make a man of religion. For I have no creative power in this sphere."

True "creative power" or the "divine spark" is revealed, for good and for bad, in a capacity to communicate with the ordinary man, to speak and bespeak, to impart and derive inspiration. But he was destined to lose the advantage of even these gifts early in life—after the apparently traumatic experience of being overwhelmingly rejected in his position on the American Jewish Congress issue. This gift of communicating with the mass of Jews was one that Stephen S. Wise, one of Magnes's chief opponents over the Congress issue as well as over others, was never to lose; though Wise's preoccupations were almost wholly secular, he managed always to convey an exuberant religious pathos. I should have liked to see in this book a dramatic juxtaposition of these two men, whose efforts early in life ran so parallel only to diverge and conflict thereafter.

Magnes "was not a philosopher, but a preacher," Mr. Bentwich writes. ". . . What he could leave to his people was not a doctrine or a creed or a treatise, but the example of a life concentrated unswervingly on moral causes and inspired by the teaching of the Hebrew prophets. . . . He made a noble attempt to realize the ideal of a Jew devoted to the service of Judaism and of humanity. . . ."

He was essentially a pastor or minister in the finest American Protestant tradition, one who shepherded a flock. As a *shtadlan* he was superb, and he rendered greater service to the Zionist enterprise in Palestine than a generation that still recalls too vividly its conflicts with his contumacious dissidence is ready to concede as yet. As a *shtadlan* in the larger diplomatic sphere, however, as a drummer of solutions for the Palestine problem, and a mediator between Arabs and Jews, Magnes was less than a success even from the most charitable viewpoint.

His outstanding quality was moral piety, though he might have seemed wanting in the humility which is generally a concomitant of this quality. He was indeed too often self-righteous, and there was an air of superiority about him. Mr. Bentwich, who suppresses no negative trait, calls it aloofness. "His aloofness saved him from the endless discussions which often precede and hamper action." Magnes's disdainful reference to the "compact majority" echoed Thoreau, whom he resembled in his predisposition to anarchism—unconsciously, of course.

His tenacious advocacy, while holding Jewish public office, of views unpopular among Americans at large would bear this out. He emerged as a leader of American pacifism at the height of the Palmer raids after World War I, when he sat on the New York Kehillah. A little later he became a champion of the Soviet experiment. It was obvious, notwithstanding his strong disclaimers, that these views would be identified with those of Jewry—at least as long as he continued to hold a Jewish public office. Yet he did not resign from that office; nor did he keep a discreet silence. Magnes's dissidence was courageous and admirable, yet his reckless disregard of its possible consequences for the community he led revealed his chronic opposition to some of the disciplines that must govern any group or society. His insistence on placing obligation to private conscience at all times above that to one's group explains his inability in later days to get popular backing for his views. This was demonstrated very clearly in Palestine.

Magnes was not alone there in advocating bi-nationalism and in saying so aloud. Dissent is man's inalienable right in democratic society, and he ran into public censure from the Jewish side only when he presented his proposals to the High Commissioner and other British government officials, which meant that he was pursuing a private diplomacy that went contrary to the policy of the democratically elected parliament of Palestinian Jewry. He behaved in much the same way in his fight, up to the very eve of Israel's founding, against the Partition plan.

Henrietta Szold shared Magnes's views and matched his fearlessness and self-confidence, but she had a humility that the strongly individualistic Magnes lacked. She wrote to him that she was "bruised and shaken" by Zionist policy which, she felt, did not accord "with the

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dreams, the ideals, even the sober expectations connected with Zionism." Yet "I cannot stand up against the official [Zionist] action. . . . Suppose I were, with a word of mine, to destroy such good as may, after all, be tucked away in the folds of the [Partition] negotiations I abhor and do not understand!"

MAGNES never doubted his rightness. He was annoyed only by his ineffectiveness. "If only I were deeply religious, I think I could speak to this people, and thence also to all of Israel, and appeal to its conscience, and awaken it to its ethical ideals and to pure action. . . . But, as it is, in whose name would I speak? In my own? Who am I and what authority is that? . . . In the name of the nation? I do not feel myself 'patriotic' enough; moreover, it would have to be, on more than one occasion, against the nation. What would be my legitimation? Who has sent me? Where are the permanent roots of my authority?"

He asked himself such questions, and yet behaved as though wholly unconscious of their purport. Had he really persuaded himself, as more than one has said, that he was possessed of a higher authority, and had he discovered the "divine spark" within himself? There is nothing in Mr. Bentwich's biography that implies this. Mr. Bentwich writes: "In his political leadership he was an aristocrat and individualist—sometimes an autocrat—with democratic convictions." This is well illustrated in his relations with Ichud, a small society of *Yishuv* elite composed of friends of Magnes and dedicated to Arab-Jewish conciliation and bi-nationalism. "Magnes was one of the authors of their program and a sponsor of their activity. Yet he did not become a member or write for their Hebrew journal, save on one occasion, lest he might be involved by a majority decision in a policy which offended his conscience."

ONE fault of this biography is that it treats Magnes's thoughts as though they formed a sovereign and original contribution. Yet Mr. Bentwich admits that Magnes was not a philosopher or theologian, and that his major contribution was "a noble attempt" to live Prophetic Judaism. Mr. Bentwich would have produced a more vivid book, and a distincter contribution to the history of the Jews in Magnes's generation, had he presented his subject in terms of the environment in which he functioned and the personalities with whom he came in contact. But this would have required a familiarity such as Mr. Bentwich apparently lacks with America and American events in the period covered. He makes much of Magnes's indebtedness to Ahad Ha-am, and mentions Quaker influence. But the debt to Ahad Ha-am was merely formal and perhaps exaggerated by Magnes himself in order to put his ideas within an acknowledged Zionist tradition to refute charges that he had renounced the Basel program.

Ahad Ha-am was a rationalist with none of Magnes's appreciation of the ritualistic and folkloristic, or taste for the mystic. Magnes's outlook was almost wholly formed by forces that had asserted themselves in the America of his formative years. There was the "Social Gospel," first and foremost, which reflected and effected a kind of revolution in American Protestantism whereby the theologian became a social worker, and parish power passed from the aristocracy of wealth and birth to the middle classes that were then claiming their voice and place in American society. The "Social Gospel" meant a great concern with the underprivileged and, particularly, the immigrant proletariat of the cities. This was expressed in the Christian Socialist movement, with which Magnes had close ties.

Moreover, there had always been a Messianic Zionist strain in American Christian tradition, and this, too, asserted itself at that time. A fusion of these tendencies with the Jewish Messianism aroused by the Russian pogroms produced Emma Lazarus. It was in this pattern within the larger American movement that Magnes was cast, as were Louis D. Brandeis and Henrietta Szold. The pattern created a distinctly American tradition in Zionism in which the American "Social Gospel" and Jewish ideals and aspirations were blended, and which deserves study on that basis.

HAD he been content to minister to the needs of his Palestine "parish," Magnes might have experienced greater fulfillment and fewer frustrations. But he aimed higher. He wished to become the moral guide of the *Yishuv*, and for this he lacked both background and that language of the market place which has always been the language of prophecy. Besides, other —perhaps greater—mentors were on the scene. There was that barefooted prophet, A. D. Gordon, preacher of the religion of labor. And there was another man—born to the purple of theology, one might say—Rabbi Kook.

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Mr. Bentwich notes that Magnes "was prone to oversimplify a complex problem by concentrating on its ethical aspects and neglecting the state of facts, he could not adjust the order of thought to the order of things." Creative simplification requires genius, intuition. A. D. Gordon and Rabbi Kook possessed it. Magnes, essentially a "Protestant," treated principles as though they were Sinaic revelation, *mitzvot* that did not brook flexibility or relaxation. Orthodox Rabbi Kook treated moral and theological principles as dynamic elements to be adjusted to the measure, the needs, and the inherent temper of each particular situation. Thus he could discuss with charity the desecration of the Sabbath in Israel's kibbutzim. Dr. Magnes, the democrat and the Reform Jew, was paradoxically incapable of the leniency and flexibility of the Orthodox Rabbi Kook, as far as his own set of principles was concerned.

Had he lived a little longer, perhaps he might have seen that events had brought "the order of things" into harmony with his "order of thought." He had warned against the consequences of Irgun terrorism. "You may say it is because of our straitened position," he wrote, "from which there is no escape, that we have declared a kind of moral moratorium, or in today's terminology a freezing of our morals. . . . It is not within the power of man to freeze his morals. The attempt to freeze the moral senses results in their atrophy."

I believe that the course the *Yishuv* and Zionism followed immediately preceding the foundation of the state was inevitable; we were the captives of history. Some of the evils Magnes predicted would follow are evident here and there in Israel today. But eventually they will disappear, and they are on the way to doing so. Were he alive today, Magnes's views would be very much on the order of the day, and he would speak for, and not merely to, the people in calling for soul-searching and greater moral zeal.

MAGNES turned from Reform to neo-Orthodoxy and attempted to amend ritual without offending tradition. His efforts were repudiated, but only because religion was at the time the concern of the Orthodox alone, and of no others, in Palestine. Today, with a *Kulturkampf* being waged by the Orthodox in Israel, and secular idealism under a cloud, Magnes's search for a neo-Orthodox compromise would have brought him a large following. At a time when most Hebrew University students were active in the resistance to British rule, he advocated, with little success, that they establish a Hull House among the Jews of the Old City of Jerusalem. Some such movement is taking root in Israel today. Hebrew University students now volunteer for work in the Maabarot and urban slum areas, to help the immigrants, to fight illiteracy, and to teach hygiene. And they do this with "Social Reformer" zeal, not hesitating to expose individuals in public office they think guilty of neglect of duty or of malfeasance.

With Rabbi Kook, Gordon, and Berl Katzenelson gone, a voice of supreme moral authority is lacking in Israel. Magnes, had he lived past October 1948, might have become that voice, and a new intelligentsia whose second language was no longer Russian, Polish, or German, but English, might have responded warmly to his American-accented Hebrew.

The Great Mother Psychology

TO WAKE IN THE MORNING. By HILDA SIDNEY KRECH. Macmillan. 342 pp. $3.75.

Reviewed by ISA KAPP

THOUGH there is a lot of triviality and breathless sparkle in this novel about civilian life during World War II, *To Wake in the Morning* does at times convey, better than a more artful or apocalyptic book might, the reaction to the war of a largely apolitical American public. Mrs. Krech catches certain phrases of vague indignation, stiff disbelief, and embarrassed banter—"They won't really let it happen"; "For your morale, I'll say you're just the soldier type"; "Ashamed of belonging to the human race"—that give the sense of a reality only half grasped, of a crisis that left young people inarticulate, almost apologetic for the drama and finality of the situation in which they found themselves.

But despite the fact that sections of the novel are portentously labeled "August 31, 1939—June 14, 1940," etc., and one can almost hear the German tanks roll, the actual war remains dim and distant. The war generation did live under a kind of illusory colored spotlight, with a momentary feeling of heightened participation in history, and I suppose there is some aptness in the way Mrs. Krech uses the European conflict mainly as a catalytic agent for the maturing

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of her heroine. Josie Colcord goes to college, spends Christmas with a Jewish family on Riverside Drive, gets a job with the OSS psychological assessment program in Washington, and through it all Mrs. Krech treats her in the proud, tender, awkward way a suburban farmer cherishes his green tomatoes. "And now, while she might in many ways be the same Josie, she felt she was a different girl because . . . the endlessly echoing straits could be crossed." She grows less raw, and that is about all that happens to her.

Lame conversations and cliché sentiments are faithfully reported ("Maybe it always hurt to be young"; "We don't have to talk, do we? . . . It's better when we don't"; "What I really mean, I guess, is that knowing human beings is exciting") and this, plus the high-school diary vocabulary, makes us think that Mrs. Krech learned her manner at the condescending school of magazines published for women. But, in fact, the baldest oversimplifications of the novel are imposed not by the crude hand of our popular culture, but by the gentle maternal principles of modern psychology. It is this wholesome guide that leads the novel into such self-consciousness about communication between young people, and turns maturity for its own sake into a Holy Grail.

Hilda Krech is the daughter of a psychologist and the wife of one, and *To Wake in the Morning* breathes that warm, old-fashioned liberated air we associate with the writings of Havelock Ellis. There is a well-drawn episode that describes how frightening and difficult it is for an unmarried girl to have an abortion, and another that deals with a Jew's temptation to imagine he is rejected for his Jewishness rather than for himself. Mrs. Krech writes of such things sympathetically and uncensoriously, with a clear-eyed, open view of human behavior. If her vistas keep shrinking, it is because she takes the goals of psychology so literally, and lets her novel become a glossary of concepts: making choices, admitting sexual needs, and recognizing fears—a file on Personality instead of a world of character. The heroine, hesitating between two loves, goes to an experienced psychologist, who explains that she is really resisting marriage itself, that she can work things out pretty well with either one. And if this rational conversation represents a considerable advance over Victorian corsets and coyness, it also seems to challenge us into a mild plea for intuition, natural at-

A broad social document—
tracing the fate of the Jews in the
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Racism and Revolution

SCAPEGOAT OF REVOLUTION. By JUDD L. TELLER. Scribner's. 352 pp. $4.50.

Reviewed by PAUL KECSKEMETI

UNTIL recently, no aspect of Soviet Communism was as little known and criticized as its actual (as against professed) racial and ethnic policies. In particular, Soviet policy toward the Jews was held up, even by people not otherwise sympathetic to Russian Communism, as a model of fairness and equity that put the practices of all non-Soviet societies, past and present, to shame. Today so naive an attitude is no longer possible; in the Russian "anti-cosmopolitanism" campaign, the Prague trials, and the abortive case prepared against the Moscow Jewish doctors, Communism blatantly appealed to anti-Semitic passions in accents echoing the most vicious Nazi diatribes. It is not even possible to maintain that overt anti-Semitism constitutes a new and radical departure in Soviet politics. Solomon M. Schwarz, in his study of *The Jews in the Soviet Union* (1951), demonstrated the destructive impact the Communist revolution had upon Jewish life in Russia virtually from the start. Under the Czarist regime the Jewish community in Russia was persecuted and oppressed; under the Soviets it was uprooted, dispersed, ground to dust. The Bolshevik revolution shattered both the material and the spiritual foundations of Jewish community life.

Nevertheless, it is possible to argue that anti-Semitic motivations *as such* played no part in the original Bolshevik policies of the Leninist period. After all, Jewish community life was rooted in religion and the Bolsheviks, as militant atheists, were bound to seek its destruction, as they have sought to destroy the Christian and Moslem religious communities. If Russian Jewry came to grief in the Bolshevik revolution, it was because it upheld traditions and was involved in activities that the Bolsheviks were committed to destroy, such as positive religion or (to mention a different area of life) "capitalistic" business; it was not *just because* they were Jews. Anti-Semitism pure and simple was introduced into Soviet policies at a later date. But Stalin's and Zhdanov's anti-Semitism expressed a personal idiosyncrasy and was a distortion of the original socialist creed of tolerance and ethnic equality. The classic tradition of socialism vigorously opposed every kind of racial prejudice.

In *Scapegoat of Revolution,* Judd L. Teller takes violent issue with this thesis. According to him, the Bolsheviks' Jewish policy was not only incidentally destructive of the Russian Jewish community in its results, it was essentially anti-Semitic in its inspiration. And what is more, the anti-Jewish animus that characterized this policy was by no means a purely Russian thing or a matter of personal idiosyncrasy: it was an integral part of the classic socialist tradition itself. All the founding fathers of 19th-century Continental socialism were anti-Semites—Fourier as well as Proudhon, Marx as well as Bakunin, and so on down the line. Racism was an integral part of their thinking.

Mr. Teller refuses to admit any essential difference between the early socialists (including Marx), who combined a gospel of class warfare with a racial bias, and later totalitarians like Hitler whose main emphasis was on race. They all professed, he writes, the same "theology," with anti-Semitism (as well as anti-Christianity) as one of its fundamental dogmas. Thus 20th-century totalitarianism is a unitary phenomenon, with German National Socialism, Italian Fascism, and Russian Bolshevism its main variants. This racist, totalitarian creed is not, according to the author, of modern origin. The same chaotic, apocalyptic gospel of violent social upheaval, with anti-Semitic overtones, already made its appearance with Luther and the Anabaptists in the 16th century.

MR. TELLER has no patience with the common stereotype, either in its gratulatory or invidious form, that sees the Jews as being automatically

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on the side of radical social reform and revolution because of their traditions, instincts, and interests. He contends, on the contrary, that in point of historical fact the Jews as a people have always shown a basically conservative orientation. Jewry traditionally was fearful that chaotic social upheaval would only bring disaster in its train, whereas a stable social order, even if oppressive, at least provided a minimum of safety and the possibility of maintaining a way of life based on Jewish spiritual values and certainties. The author views the Jews who figured so conspicuously in the modern radical and revolutionary movements as completely alienated from Jewish life, people who ceased being genuine Jews before they launched out on a revolutionary career.

But this is certainly to beg the question. If we accept as genuinely Jewish only those groups and individuals who lived according to traditional modes and forms, then non-conservative, radical, and revolutionary Jews are excluded by definition. It is important to call attention to the fact that Jewish community life as it has been lived through the centuries has had a conservative center and basis; but one must also admit that the disintegration of traditional Jewish society and spiritual categories, as of all traditional forms in modern life, is a massive phenomenon not to be blamed solely on Hitlerite or Stalinist persecution. I am afraid that Mr. Teller answers one sweeping generalization with an equally sweeping counter-generalization.

He does much the same thing, I feel, when he argues the essential identity of socialist and racist totalitarianism. The "theology" involved in Hitler's integral racism is not the same as that implied in Fourierism or Marxism. To mention a specific point: the author conjectures that one of Hitler's characteristic arguments, his rejection of the Christian churches as "Judaized," derives directly from Marx, who attacked the church in similar terms. But the conjecture is groundless. Marx charged the church with having ceased to be Christian and reverting to Judaism (by allying itself with capitalism), whereas the Nazis held that original Christianity itself was essentially Semitic and had to be drastically purged before it could be a fit religion for "Nordics."

YET if Mr. Teller's thesis is overdrawn, the evidence he presents concerning racist and anti-Semitic strands in early socialist thinking cannot be simply shrugged aside. It shows, at the very least, that socialism and racism are by no means as mutually exclusive as has been supposed. The essential content of Marxism by no means implies racism or anti-Semitism, but to Marx and many of his followers racial thinking had a curiously strong appeal. We can understand why if we examine the cultural soil from which Continental socialist thought sprang. In the mid-19th century, the practices and possibilities of modern technology were suddenly thrust upon a world habituated to the ideas of Romanticism; the combination turned out to be explosive. The old ideas of progress were greatly strengthened and extended when scientific and technological advance could be cited as evidence for them. Here was proof that mankind was, indeed, progressing. But it was not progressing as a body. Progress was centered in northwestern Europe, which had left all other regions and races of the world far behind in the race.

Technological ("scientific") conceit was the main source of the ideas of racial superiority that emerged at this time. Still prevailing Romantic habits of thought demanded that basic social facts be interpreted as expressions of collective personalities endowed with a metaphysical essence. This is what racism essentially did. It was by no means a backward-looking ideology, but an offshoot of the modern ideology of progress, flattering and sustaining the conceit of individuals and groups who felt themselves to be advancing along the direct road towards Utopia.

MARX's thought was developed in this same cultural climate. We find in him the same belief in essential progress, the same technological and scientific arrogance, the same Romantic tendency to see social advance in terms of collective persons embodying basic historico-metaphysical principles. For him, as for the racists, the main thing was to determine who was in the van in the race towards Utopia. His vanguard, of course, was not the northwestern ("Nordic") European people as a whole, but only its proletarian part. But for Marx, too, one had to be a member of the most advanced technological civilization in order to play a vanguard role. Hence his contempt for "lesser" races, for Slavs, for strata untouched by technology and progress (such as the peasantry), and also for the "backward" Jews, whom he considered to be an alien and malign excrescence

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on the body of progressive Western civilization.

All this does not mean to say that Marxism as an ideology is identical with racism. But the affinity between the two is real, and Mr. Teller deserves credit for having presented some of the evidence bearing on this issue.

A Toast to Life

SUNSET AND EVENING STAR. By SEAN O'CASEY. Macmillan. 339 pp. $4.75.

Reviewed by GERALD WEALES

IN THE last line of *Sunset and Evening Star*, Sean O'Casey offers a toast to life—rather to Life, for he has been capitalizing that word since he first started to write plays in Dublin more than thirty years ago. In time, when the easy anger of his petty literary quarrels, the violence of his attacks on Catholicism, and the relentless naivety of his Communism have dwindled into insignificance (and how he would sputter at the suggestion that they will), his humanity, his exuberance, and his peculiarly personal faith in man will remain alive to anyone who looks into the autobiographies or happens on a decent production of *The Plough and the Stars* or *Juno and the Paycock*, certainly two of the best of modern dramas. For O'Casey, living has always meant a wealth of song and dance, loving and laughter, healthy sex and close-in fighting; it has also involved a recognition of sorrow, a respect for pain, and a continued determination that there shall be as little as possible of both in the world. In the early plays he created characters that embody the vitality in which he believes; there is, for instance, Fluther Good of *The Plough and the Stars*, who is so real that he does not seem out of place when he suddenly walks the autobiographical pages alongside Sean.

THERE are no such characters in later plays, like *The Star Turns Red* and *Oak Leaves and Lavender*, in which pasteboard protagonists spout nobly leftist sentiments. These plays that came after 1939 can be forgiven or forgotten, however, for in that year O'Casey began the autobiographies; he created the semi-fictional Dublin navvy, Johnny Casside, who was to become the semi-mythical Irish playwright, Sean O'Casey, in the later volumes, and introduced him to the world in *I Knock at the Door*. Johnny Casside had all of Fluther Good's

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spirit and had besides a concern for his fellow men that led him into labor and political activities, an insatiable curiosity that forced him to educate himself, and, finally, a devotion to the art of playwrighting that caused him to break with or to be pushed away from the Abbey Theater where he first got his start. O'Casey has splashed his story across six preaching and punning volumes in which he has mixed memory and desire while juggling chronology and fact.

He has brought the autobiography to a close with *Sunset and Evening Star*. In it he writes of the last fifteen years, of World War II and his life with his family in Devon. This volume has the same kind of liveliness and invention that characterized the earlier ones and is written in the same style. O'Casey's prose is a kind of high-spirited gush that rises occasionally to noisy rhetoric and falls as suddenly into conversation, as often as not with an Irish accent; it picks its way through morasses of documented quotation, skips over slightly askew familiar lines from the classics of English poetry or from popular songs, and turns up puns so bad and so glorious that Peter De Vries must pale at the thought of them. There are sharp portraits—like the one of George Bernard Shaw and Mrs. Shaw when Sean goes to get them as guarantors for a lease—which are drawn with just a few words, although the sharpness is that of caricature. There are long passages of vituperation which remain palatable only because O'Casey suddenly looks out the window in mid-passage and sees a flower, a child, or a pretty girl, and puts down his flail for a while.

Yet for all the remarkably good bits and pieces, *Sunset and Evening Star* and the volume that immediately preceded it, *Rose and Crown*, are not as good as the first four. The reason is probably that in these last two books Sean O'Casey has replaced Johnny Casside; the author's name had crept in earlier, but it was the departure from Ireland, described in the fourth volume, that really marked the end of Casside and the concern with Sean O'Casey, the literary figure who operates, for all his protestations about being one with the workers, from a writing table. Sean could still drink with working men, but he no longer carried a hod and, try as he might, a distancing began to creep in. The same kind of separation came between Sean and Ireland. He continues to care deeply about the country and to want to know what they are saying about him in Dublin, but O'Casey across the Irish Sea in Battersea or Devon cannot speak with the same authority about the Ireland of the last twenty-five years as he could before he bid Inishfallen fare thee well.

His fulminations are a little literary although they come from the same genuine anger that formed the earlier ones, and his allegiances have the same kind of tenuousness. His Communism, which apparently reaches back to the Dublin Transport Workers Strike of 1913 and his work with Jim Larkin's IWW Transport Union, has become a series of sentimental obeisances toward Moscow and a dressing-up of stock party clichés that make the Russian-German agreement on Poland into a crusade and the possibility of Soviet labor camps a farce. His anti-Catholicism, which becomes an attack on all organized religion, is finally tiresome despite the fact that its principal target is, with some justice, the narrow and puritanical Catholicism of Ireland and despite the fact that it is sometimes funny, particularly when he takes out after Chesterton or the joylessness of Mauriac, Greene, and Eliot; he is so indiscriminate, however, that any justified criticisms get lost in a bath of abuse. His literary controversies have lost the fine flavor of the quarrel that arose in 1928 when the Abbey Theater rejected *The Silver Tassie;* he is now so querulous as he attacks George Orwell for having given him a bad review that there is no difficulty at all in agreeing with Charlotte Shaw's accusation that he is "too peevish, too peevish altogether."

The autobiography as a whole is such an achievement that it is necessary, if a little carping, to point out the obvious blemishes that mar the last two volumes. Yet *Sunset and Evening Star,* for all its defects, is an appropriate conclusion to the series. In it, O'Casey makes his bow and looks a little sadly toward the exit—twenty years too early probably if he is anything like Shaw, his favorite Irishman and playwright—leaving the world, he says, to the young who are more familiar with it. Yet even when he is most elegiac, as he is in the last chapter, the joy and the strength are present; underneath the softness and the acceptance, we can still hear O'Casey singing, as did his Young Whore in *Within the Gates,* "I'll go the last few steps of the way rejoicing; I'll go, go game, and I'll die dancing!"

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Mohammed and the Jews

JUDAISM IN ISLAM: BIBLICAL AND TALMUDIC BACKGROUNDS OF THE KORAN AND ITS COMMENTARIES: Suras II and III. By ABRAHAM I. KATSH. Published for New York University Press by Bloch Publishing Company. 265 pp. $7.50.

Reviewed by GERSON D. COHEN

IN 1832 the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Bonn announced an essay contest on the subject: "An inquiry into those sources of the Koran or Mohammedan laws which are to be traced back to Judaism." That query led to Abraham Geiger's writing his prize-winning and epoch-making essay, *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judentume aufgenommen?* The work first appeared in English in Madras, India, in 1898—translated by "a member of the Ladies' League in Aid of the Delhi Mission" to help the head of the local mission "in his dealings with Mohammedans." The rather bizarre circumstances under which so eminent a work of scholarship was translated reflects the small interest the general public of the time took in the subject. Today Islam and Islamic culture receive increasing attention from the educated layman; new editions and translations of the Muslim classics appear in many European languages, and extensive research into the origins and background of Muslim culture is being carried on. Abraham I. Katsh's work is one of the recent contributions in this field.

Though it has long been a moot subject among Semiticists whether Christianity had a crucial influence on Mohammed and his milieu, Geiger and the scholars who continued his work ascertained that whole areas of Mohammed's thought had been appropriated virtually intact from Jewish informants. We can surmise that the Jews of Arabia, like their fellows throughout the ancient world, attempted to proselytize their neighbors wherever they were permitted to do so, and quite naturally used the idiom and concepts of the Bible, Talmud, and Midrash in their missionary activity. Mohammed therefore had ample opportunity to learn a great deal about Judaism.

Nevertheless, despite our clarity about the general development of Islam, its holy book, the Koran, remains mystifying to all but initiates and professional scholars. The stiff, preachy tone of the *suras* (or chapters), with their summary allusions and cryptic references to events and legends that Mohammed knew (or thought he knew), make them extremely difficult to read intelligently. The need has long been felt for a critical commentary elucidating not only the meaning of the verses in their specific context, but also, and equally important, the sources from which Mohammed drew his theological notions. As Mr. Katsh points out, the existing critical studies of early Islam treat their subject in broad thematic terms; no one has yet tried to compose a source-commentary on the prophetic speeches.

IT IS therefore a cause for regret that Mr. Katsh's attempt to fill this gap in Islamic-Jewish scholarship should prove so disappointing. Certainly the author did not lack for material—he makes us well aware of the extent of the material on which he drew in his many and swollen footnotes. But the undigested form in which the material is presented and the looseness with which the author words his comments, leave the reader baffled as to what exactly Mohammed got from Jewish culture. The author fails to distinguish between early

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and later statements within the *suras*, and makes virtually no attempt at differentiating between Mohammed's own statements and the meaning attributed to them by his devotees.

Mr. Katsh has chosen to comment only on two *suras*—the second and third—out of a hundred and fourteen. And even in these two selections he has omitted many verses that are quite apposite to his inquiry. He would have done well at least to print the text of the passages he omitted and to summarize each chapter. As the book stands, all but experts will be obliged to keep a Koran handy to know what Mr. Katsh is discussing. He might also have employed a translation more modern than Palmer's heavy-handed version. Though there are many references to orthodox Muslim translations into English, one misses even a passing reference to Richard Bell's great rendition, let alone to Bell's important attempt to distinguish the parts of the revelations chronologically. And surely we might have been told something more about the development of Mohammed's views on Judaism than such well-known facts as his changing the direction of prayer from Jerusalem to Mecca, and substituting Arab for Jewish holidays.

Mr. Katsh's comments on the individual verses consist largely of patchwork quotations from the Jewish works which Mohammed's lines suggest to him. Little heed is paid to Geiger's stricture against taking mere similarity of ideas as proof of borrowing. Where Mohammed says that "those who misbelieve, their wealth shall not help them," the author quotes from the Forty-ninth Psalm, presumably as the source. Granted that the idea is quite Jewish, is it not also equally Christian? In citing Jewish sources, Mr. Katsh pays scant regard to their place or date of composition. Rashi, the French Biblical commentator of the 11th century, is cited as the apparent source for a number of statements that, with a little effort, Mr. Katsh could have located in pre-Muslim Jewish literature. Mohammed's picture of the luxuries of paradise is traced back gratuitously through the *Akdamot*, an 11th-century liturgical fantasy by a German rabbi, to early Jewish legends—surely a roundabout procedure. Occasionally, sophomoric scholarship becomes pure *gaffe*, as when a well-known rabbinic epigram is traced back to J. H. Hertz's modern devotional book, *Pentateuch and Haftoras*.

The author summarizes the results of his detailed analysis in an introductory essay that is generally pedestrian and occasionally confusing. A cryptic statement that Mohammed's patron angel, Gabriel, "is of the same stature in the Koran as the angel Michael in the Bible" needs considerable elaboration if it is meant to be taken seriously. One wonders, too, what Mr. Katsh means by saying that in Muslim discussions of business transactions, "it is assumed as in Jewish law that no man will go back on his word." Are we to believe that the great jurists of bygone days were really as naive as that?

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What was the relative importance of Jewish and Christian influences in the shaping of Mohammed's thought? On this important question we are given a fence-straddling citation of earlier sources. "Our study reveals that Muhammad (570-632 C.E.) borrowed extensively from Jewish sources. He was fully aware of the importance of the Jewish religion and leaned heavily upon it. He used all sources, the Bible, the Talmud, as well as the Apocrypha." In one form or another, this thesis is repeated throughout the book. It is, to say the least, an odd one. While the theory of Mohammed's total illiteracy is not seriously entertained by most critical Islamists, none of them has credited the prophet with any kind of research into literary "sources." That Mohammed borrowed much from his milieu is nothing new, but that he could use the works Mr. Katsh mentions needs a bit of proof. Mohammed might have heard every Jewish legend current in Arabia and Syria, but that is still a far cry from a systematic use of sources. The truth is, of course, that Mohammed appropriated and used stories, sayings, and notions that he heard and occasionally misunderstood. He was deeply indebted to Jews and to Judaism, but hardly to specific Jewish books.

The task of enlightening the layman on the religious milieu out of which the Koran came still awaits performance. It will require insight, literary skill, and discrimination as well as scholarship.

Book Reviewers in This Issue

Judd L. Teller's *Scapegoat of Revolution,* a study of the element of anti-Semitism in modern revolutionary movements, recently published by Scribner's, is reviewed in this issue.

Gerald Weales has written on the theater, movies, and literature for *Commonweal, Hudson Review,* the *Atlantic,* and other periodicals. He teaches English at the Newark College of Engineering.

Paul Kecskemeti is a philosopher and social scientist on the staff of the Rand research organization. His article on "The Psychological Theory of Prejudice" appeared in our issue for October of this year.

Isa Kapp, who now lives in Arlington, Va., has written criticism and general cultural comment for this and other magazines.

Rabbi Gerson D. Cohen is the Librarian of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and a member of its teaching faculty; he also teaches in the department of Semitic languages at Columbia.

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by W. W. Rostow*

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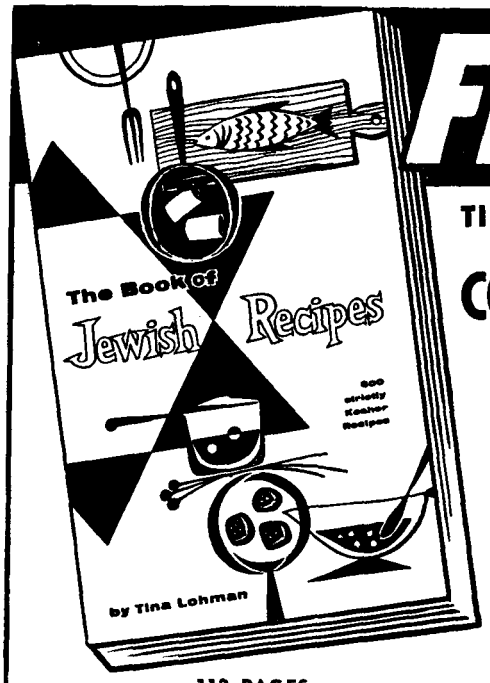

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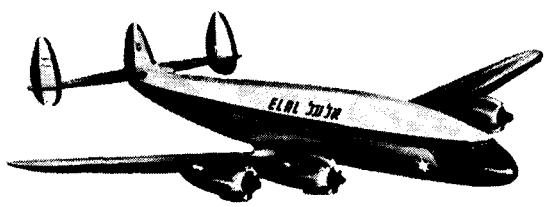

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